

COMPÉ ANANSI

**Translating the cultural appropriation of the divine
in Neil Gaiman's *Anansi Boys***

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<p>Tutkielmani tavoitteena on selvittää, miten Neil Gaimanin vuoden 2005 fantasiakirjan <i>Anansi Boys</i> ylimaallisten (englanniksi <i>divine</i>) elementtien kulttuuriappropriatio on käännetty. Tutkielman aineisto koostuu edellä mainitusta kirjasta ja sen vuonna 2009 ilmestyneestä suomennoksesta <i>Hämähäkkijumala</i>. Tutkielma on luonteeltaan poikkitieteellinen: se soveltaa sekä käännöstieteen teoriaa että yhteiskuntatieteiden teoriaa tutkiakseen aineistoa syvemmin ja holistisemmin.</p> <p>Tutkielmalla on kaksi pääteoriaa. <i>Anansi Boys</i>in kulttuuriappropriation tunnistamiseen ja analysoimiseen käytän kulttuuriappropriation käsitettä sellaisena kuin James O. Young (2010) sen määrittelee. Young jaottelee kulttuuriappropriation viiteen kategoriaan (esine-, sisältö-, tyyli-, aihe- ja subjektiappropriatio), joista erityisesti sisältöappropriatio on merkittävä tämän tutkimuksen kannalta.</p> <p><i>Hämähäkkijumalassa</i> esiintyvien kulttuuriapproprioitujen elementtien käännösten analysoimiseen sovellan kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen käännösstrategioiden teoriaa. Tarkastelen näitä käännösstrategioita kahdesta eri perspektiivistä: Paloposken (2011) neutraalista, käytännönläheisestä näkökulmasta, ja Venutin (1995) eettisestä, arvottavasta näkökulmasta. Selvitän käännöksessä käytetyn lokaalin käännösstrategian käyttäen Leppihalmeen (2001) strategiajaottelua, ja analysoin, millainen vaikutus käytetyllä strategialla on ollut lähdetekstin kulttuuriappropriatioon.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen analyysi osoittaa, että kääntämiseen käytetyllä käännösstrategialla on merkittävä vaikutus kohdetekstin kulttuuriappropriatioon. Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että kotouttava strategia voi potentiaalisesti poistaa tai häivyttää tekstin kulttuuriapproprioituja elementtejä, kun taas vieraannuttava strategia säilyttää ne todennäköisemmin tekstissä – tosin poikkeuksiakin analyysissä esiintyy. Se, kumpi strategia on parempi valinta eettisestä näkökulmasta, riippuu siitä, onko lähdetekstin kulttuuriappropriatio hyväksyttävää vai haitallista.</p>		
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ABBREVIATIONS

AAVE — African-American Vernacular English

SC — source culture

ST — source text

TC — target culture

TT — target text

1 INTRODUCTION

Let us consider the following quote from Neil Gaiman's *Anansi Boys*:

Now, probably you know some Anansi stories. Probably there's no one in the whole wide world doesn't know some Anansi stories. (*Anansi Boys*, p. 50)

Anansi Boys is a fantasy novel published in 2005 and tells the story of a black English man reuniting with his divine family. The above quotation is one of many 'narrator musings' present in the novel and harkens to Afro-Caribbean folk tales with its conversational, storytelling tone ("you know", repetition of "probably") and subject matter. The quotation is followed by an example of such a story: an Anansi story, a trickster folk tale about the death of Anansi's grandmother and the shaming of the Tiger. A story very much like this one has been collected by folklorist Martha Warren Beckwith as far back as 1924 (Beckwith, 1924), although Gaiman changes the story at places, most notably by having the grandmother die naturally instead of by Anansi's own hand. Later in the novel, the narrator recounts the story of the Tar Baby, likely more familiar to western audiences (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 133-136). We can see that Gaiman has been inspired by and loans from Afro-Caribbean and African cultural stories. Gaiman's stories seek to emulate an oral style with literary techniques, for example the conversational tone mentioned above, but they are not oral stories. After all, they are written down in a book.

But Anansi is not Gaiman's god. Anansi originates from the Akan people of West Africa (Marshall, 2012, p. 22). The story traveled with the slave trade from its roots to North and Central America, especially the Caribbean and the Southern United States. The ownership of a non-physical thing is complicated – who owns a god? – but it stands uncontested that the ancestors of these people were the original creators of Anansi and Anansi stories. Gaiman's usage of ideas, symbols and objects from another culture is called **cultural appropriation** (Schneider, 2003, p. 218), a practice much discussed, much excused and much vilified. The question arises: is Gaiman justified in using the god and folk hero, as well as the style, of another culture?

This thesis does not seek to answer such a colossal question. Instead, I will be approaching *Anansi Boys* from the viewpoint of translation, more specifically the translation theories

of **domestication and foreignization**. I analyze both *Anansi Boys* and *Hämähäkkijumala*, Inka Parpola's translation of the novel published in 2009, to see **how the cultural appropriation of the divine is translated in the novel**. Does Parpola translate cultural appropriation with a domesticating or a foreignizing strategy, or does she mix the two? What effect does the choice of translation strategy have on the resulting translation?

Ethnicity and cultural appropriation in *Anansi Boys* have been discussed rather extensively in non-scientific settings (see deepad, 2008 for a blog example, Goodyear, 2008 for a podcast example). However, scientific forays into these aspects of the novel are few and far between. It is not that the novel has not been looked at by researchers, or that Neil Gaiman is not widely studied (see Wearing, 2009; Wagner, Golden & Bissette, 2008 for examples of both), but these aspects of the novel, which I believe are an important facet of the work, have not been systematically analyzed. In this thesis, I seek to correct this by looking at the cultural appropriation of the novel as it relates to translation.

This introductory chapter of the thesis is followed by chapter 2, which looks into how cultures are represented and misrepresented both in general and more specifically through translation. The key theories of this thesis, cultural appropriation and the translation strategies of domestication and foreignization, are explained. I draw from many sources to provide a holistic view of both theories, although each theory has its main sources: Young (2010) for cultural appropriation, and Paloposki (2011) and Venuti (1995) for domestication and foreignization. As its secondary goal, this chapter seeks to clarify the strategies both in what they are and how their terminology is used.

Chapter 3 introduces us to the study of divinity and of translating it. The chapter contains descriptions of the scientific methods used in the analysis, as well as the material for it. The methods of analysis are **qualitative content analysis** and **translation analysis**. The character of Anansi is explained in more detail here, as he is a key element in the divine elements of the novel and thus in their analysis. We also briefly look at both *Anansi Boys* and its translation, as well as the authors behind them (Gaiman and Parpola, respectively).

In chapter 4, I will inspect the translation of cultural appropriation of the divine by comparing *Anansi Boys* and *Hämähäkkijumala*. I approach the choice(s) of translation

strategy from two different perspectives: a neutral viewpoint, as presented by Paloposki (2011), and an ethical viewpoint, as presented by Venuti (1995). This binary perspective allows us to analyze the TT from two points of view:

- 1) **a technical perspective:** what methods of domestication or foreignization have been used? How do these stand out, if they do, to the reader? How fluent is the result?
- 2) **an ethical perspective:** how culturally (mis)appropriating is the TT? Is this (mis)appropriation the result of a domesticating or foreignizing strategy? Has the choice of translation strategy affected the amount of cultural (mis)appropriation in the target text (henceforth TT) compared to the source text (henceforth ST)?

Finally, I sum up the thesis and its conclusions in chapter 5 and suggest further avenues for research that have sprung up over the analysis.

This thesis is an interdisciplinary work, as it combines both social sciences (in defining and recognizing cultural appropriation) and translation studies (in defining and recognizing domestication and foreignization). I believe this combination to be a beneficial one, since they have a lot in common, especially a heavy focus on culture and communication. I emphasize that my forte and object of study is translation, with social sciences a discipline I have introduced myself to specifically for this thesis. The focus of this thesis lies in translation.

2 (MIS)REPRESENTING CULTURE

The key theories used in this MA Thesis are cultural appropriation (Young, 2010) from cultural studies and the translation theories of domestication and foreignization (Venuti, 1995). Both are umbrella terms: the former refers to the use (and in some cases apprehension) of material from other cultures, the latter to the many methods of translating text either towards a culture or away from it. Cultural appropriation will be discussed in more detail in section 2.1, while domestication and foreignization will be examined in section 2.2.

Representation is an important feature of both phenomena. Most forms of cultural appropriation (asides from object appropriation) involve portraying a culture that is not your own in some way. It can be the theme of your work, or its style, or its materials. As we will see in the following section, cultural appropriation only becomes problematic when it misrepresents a culture, especially a minority culture. On the other hand, translation is in a sense all about *representing* a text in one language in another language. Thus, it is not surprising that domestication and foreignization are likewise concerned with representation: does a translator portray the text in a way that takes away as much of the foreign as possible, or in a way that maintains the original content (and possible frustrates the reader)? And like cultural appropriation, domestication can be seen as misrepresenting an author or their culture, at least according to Venuti (1995).

2.1 Cultural appropriation

Cultural appropriation is a complex concept originating in sociology and cultural studies. At its core, cultural appropriation means “the taking – from a culture that is not one’s own – of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artefacts, history and ways of knowledge” (Schneider, 2003, p. 218). However, different authors emphasize different features of cultural appropriation, or add to the definition: some separate it from cultural exchange, which happens between cultures equal in power, and only use the term to refer to misappropriation (Scafidi, 2005), while others still view it as a larger phenomenon (Rogers, 2006). The terminology is likewise muddled. The practice has been alternatively

referred to as appropriation, cultural appropriation, cultural misappropriation, cultural exchange, borrowing... The media alternatively condemns the practice (e.g. Bakar, 2018; Nittle, 2017) or excuses it (e.g. Malik, 2017; Young, 2015), often while using the term ambiguously, or addressing another issue entirely by accident. In this section, I set the groundwork for how I use the term in this MA Thesis and talk about how it applies to this thesis.

James O. Young has written extensively on the subject of cultural appropriation: his essay *Cultural appropriation and the arts* (Young, 2010) seeks to define exactly what encompasses cultural appropriation, and to argue in its defense, and he has edited and appears as a writer in *The ethics of cultural appropriation* (Young & Brunk, 2009), an essay anthology on the ethics of the practice. Young provides a fairly positive viewpoint into the practice of cultural appropriation. As he convincingly argues, “Many acts of cultural appropriation are . . . morally unobjectionable and some of them result in artworks of great aesthetic value” (Young, 2010, p. 2). He lists a series of examples of cases of positive cultural appropriation, and notes that condemning the practice as a whole is not in anyone’s interests (Young, 2010, p. 31). Young approaches the subject matter from the point of view of his field, philosophy, more specifically aesthetics.

In *Cultural appropriation and the arts*, Young provides a list of the various types of cultural appropriation he has identified, and which I will be using in this thesis (Young, 2010, p. 5-6). He divides cultural appropriation into three categories, one of which has two subcategories:

- **Object appropriation** – taking possession of a tangible work of art from another culture
- **Content appropriation** – significant use of an idea from another culture
 - **Style appropriation** – use of stylistic elements from another culture
 - **Motif appropriation** – use of motifs/themes from another culture
- **Subject appropriation** – depicting cultures that are not ones’ own from that culture’s point of view; also called **voice appropriation**

Another categorization has been suggested by Richard A. Rogers (2006), who views the issue from a more mechanism-driven perspective, i.e. how appropriation happens. His

categories are **exchange**, **dominance**, **exploitation**, and **transculturation**. I will be using Young's categorization, as it is concerned with content (what is appropriated) over mechanism, which is appropriate for this thesis.

Of Young's categories, this thesis will mostly concern itself with content appropriation and its subcategories style and motif appropriation. Parts of the novel are written in a pastiche of African and Caribbean folk tales, and many of the divine elements in the novel are borrowed from the cultures of these areas and their religions. The novel also contains plenty of subject appropriation, since it has several people of African and Caribbean heritage as viewpoint characters, who perceive the events of the novel from their own cultural viewpoint. Subject appropriation will be briefly discussed in the analysis when necessary but will mostly be cropped out of this thesis: my purpose here is to study only the translation of culturally appropriated divine elements, which relate to subject appropriation only tangentially.

Young makes a distinction between beneficial, harmless cultural appropriation and damaging, harmful cultural appropriation. The latter case may be when 1) the appropriation causes unjustifiable harm; or 2) the appropriation is unjustifiably offensive (Young, 2010, p. 18). Young further divides the possible harm caused by cultural appropriation into two categories: appropriation can constitute taking away something from another culture, i.e. theft; or the appropriation can damage the "economic, educational, or other opportunities of insiders" (Young, 2010, p. 18). Young is quick to point out that while many approach cultural appropriation primarily from the point of view of theft (e.g. most of Strang & Busse, 2011), most cases of cultural appropriation are not theft per se: the act of appropriation has not removed the ability of people from the appropriated culture to produce their own works (Young, 2010, p. 8). As for the harm caused by offense, Young uses Joel Feinberg's term 'profoundly offensive', which means something that is intrinsically offensive (Young, 2010, p. 26); later on, Young seems to dismiss this form of harm by attesting that no one has the right not to be offended (Young, 2010, p. 152).

The more harmful forms of cultural appropriation, Young notes, often come down to power (Young, 2010, pp. 3, 59). A more influential culture can far more easily harm a

less influential culture through cultural appropriation than the other way around. Young mentions unequal power caused by the appropriation of land as a situation especially prone to harmful appropriation. A powerful, influential culture can misrepresent a less influential culture in such a way that the public opinion on the less-influential culture is based entirely on views not from that culture, or more subtly, slowly change how the less-influential culture represents itself (Young, 2010, p. 25). Asymmetry is one of the key elements that can make the representation of culture problematic in some cases (when the represented culture is a minority culture) and nonproblematic in some (when the represented culture is a majority culture) (Young, 2010, p. 59), although it is important to note that Young does not treat all cultural appropriation by majority cultures from minority cultures as wrong. This idea of unequal power as the root cause of harmful cultural appropriation ties into cultural studies, where power is a key concept (Longhurst & Baldwin, 2008, pp. 11, 64), and indeed even into Venuti's thoughts on domestication and foreignization (Venuti, 1995, p. 20), which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

As the above attests, the subject matter of cultural appropriation is prone to terminological confusion and ambiguity. To make matters clear, in this thesis I will refer to harmless, positive cultural appropriation as **cultural appropriation** and to harmful, negative cultural appropriation as **cultural misappropriation**. It should be evidently clear that the distinction can be deviously hard to make. The judgment of something as appropriation or misappropriation can come down to opinion in some cases. When in the analysis chapter of this thesis I look at *Anansi Boys* and its cultural (mis)appropriations, I will clearly express what can be factually argued for compared with what constitutes opinion on my part.

2.2 Domestication and foreignization

At the core of this MA thesis are the translation strategies of domestication and foreignization. This section is devoted to explaining the terms from both a neutral and an ethics-based viewpoint. Domestication and foreignization are umbrella terms: they are global translation strategies encompassing a variety of different local translation

strategies which will be familiar to those in the field: omission, explication and many more. Local translation strategies will be looked at in more detail in section 3.1. Domestication and foreignization are both widely studied and widely employed by translators and translation researchers, and from a variety of viewpoints. Oittinen (2014) has looked at domestication and foreignization and their ethics in children's literature, Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoobi (2009) have studied the strategies from the perspective of a certain author translated into a certain language, and Wang (2002) has explored the conflict between those who support domestication and those who support foreignization, to name just a few examples. But even with this massive volume of domestication and foreignization research, exact definitions for the strategies often remain elusive. As the foreword of *Domestication and foreignization in translation studies* (Kemppanen, Jänis & Belikova, 2012, p. 7) observes, the exact definitions of domestication and foreignization have become muddled, precisely because they are easy to understand and ring true with how we fathom our own situation in relation to foreign environments.

In the analysis chapter of this MA Thesis I will be taking a two-fold view into domesticating and foreignizing strategies in *Hämähäkkijumala*: on the one hand, I will be studying the use of the two strategies from a neutral viewpoint, as presented by Paloposki (2011). This viewpoint allows us to analyze the TT from a technical perspective. On the other hand, I will be taking a Venutian viewpoint (Venuti, 1995) to the strategies, which will allow us to approach them not from a practical but rather an ethical perspective. Through this two-fold view, I aim for a more holistic understanding of the TT and of its interaction with the ST. Optimally, we will receive some insight into the nature of translating cultural appropriation in a larger sense as well.

Outi Paloposki (2011) has written a thorough treatise on the history, usage and nature of domestication and foreignization as translation strategies. I will be using her definitions of the terms throughout this MA Thesis when it comes to the practical side of translation: that is, this is what the strategies mean for translators, and what they encompass. Due to the nature of the research presented here, I will also be applying another, more ethics-concerned viewpoint into domestication and foreignization in this thesis, which derives from Venuti's work (1995). To clarify the distinction: I will be using Paloposki's description for what the words *mean* – their definition, what methods are used to achieve

them, in what forms they are found in translations – while I will be using Venuti's description for what the words *imply* – what they mean for the cultural aspects of the text, what they tell about the ethics of translation, and especially how they relate to cultural appropriation.

Domestication refers to “the adaption of the cultural context or of culture-specific terms” (Paloposki, 2011, p. 40). The idea is that a domesticated translation will be as easily accessible to a TC reader as it is to a SC reader. In some cases, domestication could seek to give a reader the same experience from the text as the original does. For example, let us imagine a dismissive mention of, say, homosexuality by an author. This mention is written with the assumption that the target audience will agree with the author. Such a text, directly translated, with likely does not have the same effect in a culture more accepting of different sexualities, while a domesticated translation without the vitriol might. However, this means the facts, the subject and/or the cultural values that the writer intended might not get translated: for example, if a translator changes how women are discussed in a text (adjective and pronoun use, length of descriptions and so on) to conform to target-language norms, they could be radically altering the intention of the ST.

Foreignization, on the other hand, refers to “the preserving of the original cultural context, in terms of settings, names etcetera” (Paloposki, 2011, p. 40). The information content and the style of the ST remain, but this does not mean the reader will get the same impact from the text. If the reader is unable to understand or feels differently about some feature of a foreignized text, they have been denied the experience the original was supposed to provide. For example, a child cannot be expected to have a wide grasp of foreign concepts, so children's books tend to (but of course do not always) deal with domestic concepts. If such a book is translated foreignizingly, the purpose of the book is defeated, as a child reading the translation might not enjoy it or will be unable to understand it.

It is important to note that Paloposki ends her summary with a warning. She reminds the reader that domestication and foreignization are abstractions, and advocates care in applying them to empirical studies (Paloposki, 2011, p. 42). This tells volumes not only of the muddled nature of the subject, but of the impasse a researcher is put into when studying domestication and foreignization. This MA Thesis seeks to use the terminology

of its subject matter precisely as outlined above, while keeping in mind the Venutian ethical aspect that follows.

Domestication and foreignization as translation strategies were first posited by Lawrence Venuti (1995). While he was not the first to observe the two strategies – Friedrich Schleiermacher outlined them as far back as 1813 in *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens* – Venuti made a lot of headway into pinning them down as we understand them nowadays. The two authors, Venuti and Schleiermacher, had very different approaches to the strategies. Schleiermacher put it succinctly when he wrote that foreignization “leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him” and domestication “leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher, 2012, p. 49). Venuti, on the other hand, set forth no concise definition, which is one of the reasons *The translator’s invisibility* can be hard to understand. Venuti did write about “. . . a domesticating method, an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home, and a foreignizing method, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad,” but makes clear in the text that this is what (Venuti believes) Schleiermacher was saying (Venuti, 1995, p. 20). In this, I believe Venuti is using Schleiermacher’s words to further his own theory, since while perhaps not without an agenda of his own, Schleiermacher certainly did not assign his strategies ethical roles.

It is these ethical roles that set Venuti’s domestication and foreignization apart from both Schleiermacher and later writers, who write about domestication and foreignization more neutrally, as practical strategies to solve practical problems. To Venuti, foreignization is an ethically correct translation strategy for a translator that translates from a culturally marginal language towards a major language, as he believes foreignizing translation to be a dissident cultural practice which allows a marginal or minority culture to effectively refuse a more dominant culture (Venuti, 1995, p. 148). Likewise, he frames domestication as a form of submission to a more powerful culture and its language, a form of assimilation; indeed, Venuti often replaces the domestication/foreignization pair with submission/resistance, further muddying the concepts in the text (Venuti, 1995, p. 308).

This impreciseness, as well as many other features of Venuti's seminal work, have been targets of heavy criticism from other translation researchers and authors. Tymoczko (2000) has noted the abovementioned lack of coherence in Venuti's categorization, while Baker (2010) has argued against the whole notion of a binary system of translation strategies. Even Paloposki, even though her treatise is otherwise very neutral and without judgment, notes Venuti's "non-systematic use of concepts and the belligerent rhetoric" in her treatise (Paloposki, 2011, p. 41). Myskja (2013) has written a thorough article on criticisms laid on Venuti's domestication and foreignization theory by different researchers.

Venuti's views on domestication and foreignization are not the most practical for the purposes of actual translation, not least of all because he gives few if any examples of actual hands-on methods fitting under the umbrella terms domestication and foreignization. However, this MA Thesis concerns not only practical translation practices, but also how they apply to culturally appropriated elements, and from this viewpoint Venuti becomes a valuable source. Venuti's views tie directly to contemporary discussion of cultural appropriation. When he presents descriptions of Arabic culture by Strabo and Tarchetti, and ultimately dismisses both as fundamentally Eurocentric, he describes the very essence of cultural appropriation, even if he does not use that term for the practice (Venuti, 1995, p. 159). As Venuti puts it, the two authors "aim to make Persia and Arabia perform an European function . . . and they never escape the racist opposition between Western rationality and Eastern irrationality", which is almost a textbook example of cultural misappropriation.

Venuti's terminology is likewise very close to that used in research on cultural appropriation and in the field of cultural studies. His opinions on submission and resistance harken to very Foucaultian views of power and control; his linking of Orientalism to domestication resembles Said's (1978) views; and most of all his discussion of subjectivity (Venuti, 1995, p. 24) as a key element of translation, domestication and foreignization ties directly into cultural studies, where subjectivity is an important concept (e.g. Barker, 2016; Foucault, 1982; Johnson, 1986/7). Venuti offers foreignizing translation as the cure for what he calls the "ethnocentric violence of translation", labeling it an intervention in unequal cultural exchange and a form of

resistance against ethnocentrism, racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism (Venuti, 1995, p. 20). Of note is that the ideas presented, of hegemonic English-language nations and the 'current' state of world affairs, is exactly as topical now as it was in 1995, when Venuti wrote his book.

3 STUDYING DIVINITY

This chapter is devoted to looking at the method with which I will be analyzing the material of the study, as well as that material itself. Comments on the divine elements and their domesticating and/or foreignizing translations will be reserved for chapter 4, with this chapter only explaining how those features will be analyzed, and the works from which the features will be drawn.

Defining what counts as divine can sometimes be problematic. Merriam-Webster gives the following definitions (usage of the word as a synonym for “superb” is ignored here):

A: of, relating to, or proceeding directly from God . . . or a god; B: being a deity; C: directed to a deity (Merriam-Webster, 2018).

Anansi is specifically noted to be a god in *Anansi Boys* (p. 45), so the presence of the divine is evident in the novel. That said, authentic Anansi stories (discussed in section 3.1) rarely mention Anansi’s godhood. He is a folk hero, his divinity showcased in the mystical powers he wields and in the relationships he has with more obvious deities. In this thesis, when I talk about the divine, I use the Merriam-Webster definition. Only those things that come from gods, are related to gods, or that are gods are considered divine, and thus under study in this thesis.

3.1 Method

This MA Thesis has two elements to it, with the two theories described earlier mapping to those elements: the divine in *Anansi Boys*, which will be studied through a cultural appropriation lens; and the translation of said divine, which will be studied through a domestication and foreignization lens. It logically follows that the method of this thesis divides into two facets as well: recognizing the divine elements in the novel, and further recognizing their cultural appropriation; and contrasting the ST (Gaiman’s *Anansi Boys*) with the TT (Parpola’s *Hämähäkkijumala*) and analyzing how those divine elements have been translated. The two hands-on methods that will be used to achieve this twofold approach are **qualitative content analysis** for the former and **translation analysis** for the latter.

Krippendorff defines content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18). The aim of content analysis is to study a given text (the word is used here in its broad meaning) in depth, looking at what the text is about, what its context is, what it aims to do and how it achieves, if it achieves, this aim. **Qualitative content analysis**, then, is content analysis focused on the *why* and *how*, instead of more quantitative quandaries on probabilities and amounts.

In this thesis, I will be going through *Anansi Boys* with a qualitative perspective directed at the divine features of the novel, hopefully identifying all the divine elements contained in the work. I will then study these elements from the perspective of cultural appropriation: is this a culturally appropriated element? Is the cultural appropriation of an acceptable, beneficial kind or a cultural misappropriation? Why has Gaiman used and/or appropriated this element, and what is the consequence for the text?

The study of the divine elements and their appropriation in *Anansi Boys* is then followed by a look into the translation of those elements in *Hämähäkkijumala*. The translation is dissected through **translation analysis** (a broad methodology encompassing a multitude of approaches), more specifically qualitative TT translation strategy analysis. I will look at the TT in the light of translation strategies and compare it with the ST, seeing the similarities and differences in information content, meaning and tone. The translation strategies for analyzing the TT are borrowed from Leppihalme, who outlines in her essay seven local strategies for translating realia (2001, p. 141). Even though the strategies are specifically mentioned for translating realia, I believe they are appropriate for studying the translation of domesticating and foreignizing elements: Leppihalme notes that the local strategies stem from the global strategies at work in the translation, and specifically alludes to domestication and foreignization as such global strategies (“a translator may want to retain a succession of foreign elements in the target text, thus emphasizing the exotic, or to domesticate the foreign” [ibid., p. 140]). Note that realia are not within the scope of this thesis. Leppihalme’s strategies and her examples are as follows:

- **Direct transfer:** retaining the element as-is, possibly with minor grammatical changes (e.g. “pub” → *pubi*)
- **Calque:** translating word-for-word (e.g. “ginger beer” → *inkivääriolut*)
- **Cultural adaption:** replacing an SC element with a TC element (e.g. “Hyde Park Corner” → *Esplanadinkulma*)
- **Superordinate term:** translating with a hypernym (e.g. “Spotted Dick” → *jälkiruoka*)
- **Explication:** writing the term open in the TT (e.g. “the Blitz” → *Lontoon pommitus*)
- **Addition:** adding metatextual material, for example footnotes, to explain the element (e.g. “gin”, with a footnote reading *katajaviina*)
- **Omission:** removal of the element (e.g. “ricotta cheese in filo pastry” → *ricottajuustopasteija*)

Of the seven strategies Leppihalme mentions direct transfer as a clearly foreignizing strategy (2001, p. 141) and cultural adaption as a clearly domesticating one (ibid., p. 142), but the rest seem to fall somewhere between the two ends. Further complicating the matter is the fact that most of the strategies can be used in either a foreignizing or a domesticating manner (for example, omitting a cultural feature is domesticating, but omitting an explanation of a cultural feature would be foreignizing). The strategies can also be combined (for example using a calque along with explication). In the analysis chapter, I will seek to place Parpola’s translation choices within the parameters of this categorization, as it will help me more systematically study her use of domestication and foreignization in the TT.

The perspective taken in this thesis is that of domestication and foreignization translation strategies, for the reasons outlined in chapter 2. I believe this order of study – qualitative content analysis of the ST first, translation analysis of the TT second – to be beneficial to the thesis, in that once we have recognized and analyzed the divine in the ST, it is easier to look into the translation of said elements in the TT.

In the analysis chapter, I will look at the translation of divine elements in *Hämähäkkijumala* and attempt to rationalize how and why Parpola’s translation is the

way it is. Special attention will be paid to the domesticating and foreignizing choices in the translation. Hopefully, this will allow us to see the connection between domestication and foreignization and cultural appropriation, if indeed there is any. My intention is to take a descriptive stance on both Parpola's translation and Gaiman's original. The analysis is impartial and neutral. That said, I will be commenting on how well Parpola's translation works and on how fluent it is at times, as well as on any cultural misappropriation I find in the ST and the TT. These comments allow me to study whether domestication or foreignization is having the intended effect, or any affect at all, especially from a cultural appropriation viewpoint.

3.2 Material

The material for this thesis is *Anansi Boys*, a novel from 2005 by Neil Gaiman, and *Hämähäkkijumala*, its Finnish translation from 2005 by Inka Parpola. Both will be described briefly, and a few words spent on the writer and translator. As the culturally appropriated divine elements of *Anansi Boys* are the subject under study, it is justified to also spend a few pages describing the source of these appropriations: Anansi, the folk hero of Akan mythology.

3.2.1 Anansi

Anansi (an Akan word meaning "spider") is a folk hero, a god, and a storyteller originally from Akan folklore from modern-day Ghana and the Gold Coast (Marshall, 2012, p. 22). Like many characters in folklore, he is a man of many shapes – sometimes a man, sometimes a spider – and of many names, as noted by Abrahams to often be the case in oral stories (2011, p. 19). Abrahams lists the names *Anansi*, *Buh Nansi*, *Compé Anansi* (*compé* stated to mean something like "companion" or "pal"), *Nancy*, *Anancy*, and *Aunt Nancy*. Allen (2012) attests that *Kwaku Ananse* (also in Appiah, 1967) is the Akan name of the original deity, and that names like *Brer Anancy* and *Kompa Nanzi* are born from the various language contexts of the countries the stories migrated to. This MA Thesis uses Anansi throughout, as it is the name used in Gaiman's *Anansi Boys*.

Anansi is first and foremost a trickster, being characterized through creativity, cunning, deceit and trickery (Allen, 2012, p. 2). In his stories, Anansi overcomes his foes through cleverness instead of brute strength and favors skill in speech and quick wits to physical activity. Many of the stories describe how Anansi avoids having to work or gets things for free through deceit, although many are also about his failures. All this is in line with the trickster archetype, which is a well-studied phenomenon (e.g. Doty & Hynes, 1993; Hyde, 1999). The role of the trickster is to function simultaneously as both good and bad example: the trickster uses their wits and is rewarded, but also acts foolishly or too quickly and is punished.

As the case is with many subject matters from the Old World, research on Anansi is scarce before he moved to the New. That is to say, there are few studies on Anansi as he appears in his original form, and the research only picks up when the tales moved to the Americas. What is studied in these works (e.g. James, 2004; Marshall, 2012) is more what Anansi *represents* and *how* he is represented in his newfound home in the United States and the Caribbean, and less what Anansi *is* or was in his native Africa. This makes it hard to give a definitive description of the character, since most of the research available concentrates on Anansi of the Americans instead of Anansi of the Akan. However, these sources are entirely appropriate for this thesis, since as we will see in the next section and in the analysis, Gaiman draws mostly from the Americas-bound aspect of the character.

Anansi as the subject matter of this thesis is especially appropriate, considering what the character represents. Anansi, as all tricksters, empowers the weak (that is, physically weak) by showcasing alternative paths to achieving power. The Caribbean Anansi is the culmination of this, as he was ‘brought over’ by people sold as slaves and forcibly relocated to the Caribbean. In this context, Anansi serves as a source of comfort, and of what Allen describes as “a ‘game’ being played out between the powerless and powerful, in which the subordinate group realized and established its own forms of (relative) power while complying or appearing/feigning to comply with the norms of the dominant group” (Allen, 2012, p. 2). Anansi and Anansi stories are about power – who has it, how it can be gained, who gets to tell the story – which ties them directly into our earlier discussion about cultural appropriation and domestication and foreignization.

3.2.2 Neil Gaiman and *Anansi Boys*

Since this MA Thesis concerns itself with cultural appropriation, a few words about the author of *Anansi Boys*, Neil Gaiman, are justified, followed by a cursory look into the nature of *Anansi Boys* – in-depth probing of the work (especially the cultural appropriation in it) is left for the analysis chapter later in the thesis. Gaiman was born in Hampshire, UK, and currently lives in the United States (“Biography”). Gaiman is of Polish-Jewish descent and comes from a Scientologist family, although he himself identifies as neither Jewish nor Scientologist (Wagner, Golden & Bissette, 2008, pp. 447-449).

As a prolific, award-winning author of novels, comic books, poetry, films and more, Gaiman has been translated time and time again within different genres. In his blog, Gaiman answers a question about translating his novel *The Graveyard Book*: “What I want is for the reader, in whatever the reader's native language is, to get something close to the experience that a reader in [sic] of the original in English would have.” (Gaiman, 2017) He goes on to describe several radical approaches to translating his own works in a positive manner, while also giving a few examples of translators going too far. This seems to suggest that Gaiman himself prefers relatively free-form translation and would seem to err on the side of domestication: “something close to the experience that a reader in the original English would have” rings close to Schleiermacher’s “leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher, 2012, p. 49).

Anansi Boys is an urban fantasy novel with comedy and horror elements. It tells the story of Fat Charlie, a black Englishman who reunites with his paternal family, as well as the divinity that comes with this – his father being a god. Since this thesis is concerned with cultural appropriation, and more specifically cultural appropriation of the divine, an in-depth plot description is in no way necessary. More important are the characters, as they are the eyes through which a reader accesses the story and its divine elements – eyes that belong to people of ethnicities and cultures that the author or even necessarily the reader do not share. A brief *dramatis personæ* is given below. Only those characters who relate

to the novel's divine elements and who's heritage, ethnicity or race is drastically different from Gaiman's are listed here, as the others are not important to this thesis.

- **Charles “Fat Charlie” Nancy:** The main character of the novel. An easily-embarrassed man of Afro-Caribbean descent who moved to the United Kingdom with his mother when he was young. It is mentioned that his cultural heritage causes him some perturbation after the move (*Anansi Boys*, p. 26), but he adjusts to English culture to the point of considering himself English.
- **Spider:** Fat Charlie's brother and the more godlike of the two. Fat Charlie and Spider used to be one person but were divided in childhood by Louella Dunwiddy into two people: the human Fat Charlie and the god Spider. Spider is described as the epitome of African-American cool: his life is partying, blues, and sexual activity. He also takes after his divine father in that he too is a trickster-figure.
- **Mr. Nancy:** Fat Charlie's father, the trickster spider god Anansi. As a deity in human form, it could be argued that Mr. Nancy has no ethnicity per se but is described with typically Afro-Caribbean features. The source of the character (originally Akan folklore which spread to the Caribbean) also makes Mr. Nancy an avatar of West African and Caribbean faith in a way.
- **Callyanne Higgle:** A friend of Mr. Nancy's and a figure from Fat Charlie's childhood. Callyanne is the most obviously black character in the cast, speaking in distinct AAVE, making traditional soul food and so on. In some respects, she falls into the problematic mammy archetype (see for example Jewel, 1993; Thurber, 1992) in that she is a sassy, physically large black woman who nonetheless serves a supportive and maternal role.
- **Louella Dunwiddy:** An elderly woman who performed the separation of Fat Charlie and Spider. Like Callyanne, Louella speaks in AAVE, although less pronouncedly than Callyanne.

The matter of race in *Anansi Boys* is an important facet of the novel not only from a cultural viewpoint, but in the opinion of the novel's author as well. In an interview for Collider (Radish, 2011), Gaiman speaks about wanting to represent people of different ethnicities and speaks against whitewashing in movies, stating: “I don't like it when black characters become white in movies, or things like that.” Indeed, Gaiman has stated that

the catalyst for the novel was comedian Lenny Henry complaining that there are no horror or fantasy movies with black leads and black casts (Martin & Pesca, 2008). Gaiman specifically chose to avoid referring to the characters in the novel as black; quite the contrary, he labels characters as white when they are (ibid.). Thus, it is clear that race and ethnicity are matters Gaiman considered when writing the novel, however he ended up representing them.

It is worth noting that Gaiman considers Fat Charlie to be first and foremost English (Wagner, Golden & Bisette, 2008, p. 336). In some ways, the novel is about him rediscovering his father's side of the family – representing both the African and the divine – which he has distanced himself from. Fat Charlie is the most frequent viewpoint character in the novel, so at least in these parts Gaiman is representing an English person, although certainly an English person entirely unlike the author himself (born American, different skin color and so on). This does not mean Gaiman does not represent other cultures from the viewpoint of those cultures in the novel at all, since several of the other viewpoint characters, including Charles' brother Spider, are not English.

3.2.3 Inka Parpola and *Hämähäkkijumala*

Anansi Boys was translated and first published in 2009, by Inka Parpola and Otava, respectively. It is hard to find any concrete information on Parpola: her LinkedIn profile tells us little besides from her having worked both as a translator and a teacher at Mäkelärinteen aikuislyseo, and studied “English philology, Finnish literature and Italian philology” at the University of Helsinki (Parpola). She has translated a plethora of novels, including many novels in the *House of Night* series, and another novel by Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*. Parpola has also translated graphic novels, but apparently none by Gaiman, who has worked in the medium extensively.

Gaiman has been extensively translated into Finnish outside of Parpola's work, including novel translations by Mika Kivimäki (*Neverwhere*, *Stardust*, *American Gods*, *Coraline*) and graphic novel translations mostly by Petri Silas (*The Sandman* series, *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere*, *Coraline*, *The Dream Hunters*) and Jukka Heiskanen (*The Sandman* series). Thus, a sort of canon of Gaiman translation exists, allowing a translator that faces a

translation problem while working on Gaiman to look for answers in the translations of others. Of course, we cannot know whether Parpola has read earlier Gaiman translations and/or if she has drawn inspiration from them.

4 ANALYZING TRANSLATION

This chapter is devoted to the heart of this MA Thesis, the analysis. I will be using the tools and materials discussed above. As the name of the thesis asserts, the analysis is concerned solely with looking into how the cultural appropriation of the divine is translated with regards to domestication and foreignization. That said, I will also spend a few words on both the ST and the TT in general, as this allows us to approach both texts with a broader view and gives new insight into the texts' cultural appropriation and domestication and foreignization as well. Bear in mind that this thesis is not a critique: while I will discuss the potential problems with Gaiman's cultural appropriation and any possible mistranslations Parpola has made, I will refrain from judging either.

The analysis chapter is divided into sections based on the different types of divine material in the text. I have identified these types through a close reading of the text, comparing the content of the novel with the material I have outlined in chapter 3. Three types of divine material stand out: divine **names**, divine **practices**, and divine **stories**. The first category, divine names, is analyzed in section 4.1. This category consists of names and titles of non-Anglosphere origin that appear in the text, as well as to some extent, the characters behind them. It is important to look at not only the name and its translation, but also the referent, as it both plays a part in the potential cultural appropriation of the name and can serve to explain choices made by the translator.

The second category, divine practices, encompasses any rituals and magical practices present in the novel; these are analyzed in section 4.2. Descriptions of divine practices are perhaps the least common of the three categories in the novel, but their importance is not to be understated. Religion, ritual and the otherworldly is how many cultures define themselves and are often the most important – and most jealously guarded – of cultural features. Thus, their cultural appropriation is a sore point, and immense care should be taken in translating features so appropriated. Note that for the sake of completeness this category does include rituals and practices that are not particular to African or Afro-Caribbean culture. Given the context, a reader could very well be led to believe that such a practice is somehow tied to those cultures, constituting misappropriation.

The third category, divine stories, is analyzed in section 4.3, and deals with a distinctive feature in African and Afro-Caribbean divinity: storytelling. As we have seen in section 3.2.1, storytelling is a key part of the Akan beliefs Anansi is originally from, and indeed Anansi traveled to the Americas embedded in stories. The conversational narration of *Anansi Boys* could be said to reflect this storytelling tradition, but what most stand out are three Anansi stories told throughout the book: **Anansi's Grandmother** (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 51-54), **Anansi and the Tar-Baby** (ibid., pp. 133-136), and **Anansi and Bird** (ibid., pp. 214-216). Each of the three draws from an actual Anansi story, and has a very distinctive (imitated) style. Thus, their translations provide a lot of material for study.

4.1 Divine names

Using names from another culture constitutes style appropriation – use of stylistic elements from another culture (Young, 2010, p. 6) – on Gaiman's part by its very nature. After all, cultural appropriation is “the taking . . . of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artefacts, history and ways of knowledge” (Schneider, 2003, p. 218). Names and titles clearly fit this definition, and it should be evidently clear that Anansi and the other entities discussed in this section are from a different culture to Gaiman's. Whether or not this practice constitutes cultural misappropriation is a harder thing to determine. Cultural appropriation becomes misappropriation when it causes harm, and one could argue that by representing, say, Anansi from a position of power (Gaiman is an award-winning, wealthy novelist), the image of Anansi most people have turns to that more influential view, thus causing harm to the original culture's views. On the other hand, Gaiman does increase people's awareness of such things existing in the first place and presents many of the names and characters in similar ways to the original culture. This ambiguity of appropriation vs. misappropriation should be kept in mind as we study divine names in more depth.

Names are an important feature both in mythology and in folklore, including folk tales. The example of Anansi's global polynymia (having multiple proper names) given in section 3.2.1 reflects this importance. It would thus not be surprising if Gaiman has likewise reflected this polynymia in some way, either in acknowledging it (in the narrative

or outside it in for example interviews) or employing it in some way in the novel. Likewise, translating such key features of the text can be challenging to the translator. In the fantasy genre, in mythology and in folk tales, names have more than an identifying function. They also often mean something, as we have seen to be the case with Anansi (“spider”). How has Parpola dealt with the translation of these features, and has she employed domestication or foreignization in particular?

I have found no interview or other source from Gaiman that indicates that he has acknowledged Anansi’s polynymia outside the novel. We can surmise that the phenomenon is not unknown to him, as he has employed extensive polynymia in his other works, for example the following passage from *American Gods*:

I told you I would tell you my names. This is what they call me. I'm called Glad-of-War, Grim, Raider, and Third. I am One-Eyed. I am called Highest, and True-Guesser. I am Grinnir, and I am the Hooded One. I am All-Father, and I am Gondlir Wand-Bearer. I have as many names as there are winds, as many titles as there are ways to die. (*American Gods*, 2001, p. 145).

Thus, any possible acknowledgement or employment of polynymia is to be found in the novel itself. The following table (Table 1) lists all occurrences of divine names and titles in *Anansi Boys*. The table contains the character or deity, any synonyms used (these are usually obvious enough in the text to cause no ambiguity), the number of occurrences, and finally all translations used (without inflection) along with back-translation (by the author of this thesis) when the name has a meaning in Finnish. The table is organized by the order in which I will be analyzing the names.

Table 1. Divine names in *Anansi Boys* and *Hämähäkkijumala*.

NAME	SYNONYMS	NO.	TRANSLATION
Anansi	Compé Anansi Anansi the Spider Brother Anansi Mr. Nancy	147	<i>Anansi</i> <i>Compé Anansi</i> <i>hämähäkki Anansi</i> (“spider Anansi”) <i>Veli Anansi</i> (“Brother Anansi”) <i>herra Nancy</i> (“mister Nancy”) <i>hämähäkkijumala</i> (“spider god”)
Spider		300+	<i>Spider</i>
Mawu	the Singer	3	<i>Mawu</i> <i>Laulaja</i> (“the Singer”)
Bird Woman	Bird	31	<i>Lintunainen</i> (“Bird Woman”) <i>Lintu</i> (“Bird”)
Tiger	Brother Tiger	84	<i>Tiikeri</i> (“Tiger”) <i>Veli Tiikeri</i> (“Brother Tiger”)
Monkey		20	<i>Apina</i> (“Monkey”)
Cheetah		1	<i>Gepardi</i> (“Cheetah”)
Elephant		4	<i>Elefanti</i> (“Elephant”)
Snake		2	<i>Käärme</i> (“Snake”)
Hyena		2	<i>Hyeena</i> (“Hyena”)
Lion		6	<i>Leijona</i> (“Lion”)
Rhinoceros		1	<i>Virtahepo</i> (“Hippopotamus”)
Crocodile		3	<i>Krokotiili</i> (“Crocodile”)
Gazelle		1	<i>Gaselli</i> (“Gazelle”)
Python		1	<i>Pyton</i> (“Python”)
Rabbit		1	<i>Jänis</i> (“Rabbit”)
Scorpion		1	<i>Skorpioni</i> (“Scorpion”)
Mouse		1	<i>Hiiri</i> (“Mouse”)

Many of the above names are used both as proper nouns and as common nouns (“brown garden spider” vs. “said Spider”). Table 1 only lists proper name usage. The table also excludes all instances and variations of the Judeo-Christian god (“God’s Green Earth”, “Good Lord” etc.), as these do not constitute cultural appropriation on Gaiman’s part and are thus outside the scope of this thesis.

The most important divine character in the novel is Anansi, father of protagonist Fat Charlie. Why Gaiman chose this specific spelling from those available is hard to tell. Anansi seems to be the most ubiquitously used one in Western sources, including for example the Anansi Wikipedia article. Anansi’s name is the one with the most polynymia in the novel, as well as being the second-most common divine name. This suggests that Gaiman knows about and employs the polynymia inherent to the mythological character in his novel. The different synonyms used for the character depend on their function in the text: when talking about Anansi’s function as Fat Charlie’s father, the name Mr. Nancy is almost invariably used; in the pastiche folk stories (the divine stories discussed in section 4.3) sprinkled throughout the novel, Brother Anansi and Anansi the Spider are common; and Compé Anansi is used only twice, both in dreamlike situations. This suggests a systematicity to the polynymia: Gaiman has chosen one name to serve as the baseline (in this case Anansi), and deviates from it for effect in specific situations.

Parpola’s translations of Anansi and synonyms are very straightforward: in all cases, she has used the strategy of direct transfer, or translated the name almost verbatim. This is perhaps an unsurprising choice of strategy, but an interesting one nonetheless from a domestication/foreignization viewpoint. As we know, Anansi is not only the name of a character, but also means “spider”. In using a foreign word for a name, Gaiman creates a foreignizing effect in his writing: he “[preserves] the original cultural context, in terms of settings, names etcetera” (Paloposki, 2011, p. 40), to use translation terminology. The “original cultural context” here is the one Gaiman appropriates ideas from, not one he is translating, but the effect is the same. This means that Parpola’s choice of preserving the original form of the name from the ST in the TT carries over a kind of foreignizing effect. The name remains as foreign to a Finnish reader in *Hämähäkkijumala* as it was to an English reader in *Anansi Boys*. Translating, say, “Brother Anansi” as *Veli Anansi* is not

immensely foreignizing, but it carries much the same effect, not to mention that one could have translated the name much more domesticatingly.

One such instance of domestication of the name Anansi does happen in the translation, and it is a case worth discussing. I am talking about the name of the novel. The original title *Anansi Boys* has been translated using a superordinate term, as *Hämähäkkijumala*, literally “spider god”. The ST title refers to Fat Charlie and Spider (Anansi’s boys), while the TT title just states Anansi’s role. This means the translation is not only a superordinate term, it is also a superordinate term for only half of the ST title. This is a rather extreme case of domestication: Parpola has, in effect, domesticated not only the ST, but also in some ways the culture it appropriates from, in that Anansi’s role (that of a spider god) is explicated. Considering this is the title of the translated novel we are talking about, the domesticating translation could very well be a dictum from above, as an attempt to make the book more marketable. Perhaps *Anansin pojat*, a more literal translation of the ST title, was thought too obtuse. This is not the case with most translations of the novel, however. Many have gone with direct translations (Portuguese *Os Filhos de Anansi*, Dutch *De bende van Anansi*, Spanish *Los hijos de Anansi*, even the immensely foreignizing German *Anansi Boys*).

By far the most commonly used divine name in the novel is Spider, Fat Charlie’s brother. The number of mentions of this name exceeds three hundred. The use of the name Spider by Gaiman is an interesting choice. Since Anansi means “spider”, Anansi’s son shares his name, making Anansi’s son a sort of Anansi Jr. Considering that the character Spider is well-acquainted with the mortal world, and has tight connections to American culture, his name can be taken as a purposeful nod to cultural assimilation. Anansi himself is more connected to the god’s native Africa, while Spider is closer to Anglosphere culture. Spider is also the more active character in the novel: Anansi works in the background and in the past, while Spider operates in the present. In this way, Gaiman seems to either play with the very cultural appropriation he performs, or tiptoe around the issue. He leaves Anansi in peace as much as possible, and instead makes more use of a character closer to (although still relatively far from) his own cultural sphere.

Parpola's translation goes with a foreignizing strategy. Each instance of Spider is translated with a direct transfer, inflected according to Finnish grammar (*Spiderilla*, *Spiderin* etc.). The choice of strategy here is similar to the one chosen for translating Anansi. In both cases, exact renditions are used throughout the novel, and the end result (whatever the conscious choice of strategy may be) is foreignizing. While translating Anansi directly can be attributed to the foreignness of the word in English, Spider is a word with an obvious English meaning, so the same explanation does not work here. Nor can the choice of translation strategy be explained with lack of Finnish equivalents: Finnish has several synonyms and circumlocutions for *hämähäkki* ("spider") which could have been used to inventively name the character in the TT. To prove my point, I propose *Lukki* ("harvestman spider") as a non-word-for-word translation that carries much the same feel as the original. Parpola's decision to translate the name directly thus suggests a consciously foreignizing choice, or perhaps an unwillingness to stray from the strategy used for other named, non-divine characters, which are invariably translated with direct transfers.

Mawu, mentioned only three times in the novel – twice as Mawu and once as the Singer – is nonetheless worth discussing in more detail. Mawu is the female half of the androgynous creator-deity Mawu-Lisa in the mythology of the Fon people (Lynch & Roberts, 2010, p. 81). Like with Anansi, parts of this mythology have been transported across the ocean with the slave trade, so in many places where Anansi is known, Mawu is likewise. However, no source seems to connect the two deities in any way. In *Anansi Boys*, Mawu is the creator god who gives stories to Anansi (*Anansi Boys*, p. 213), but in Akan mythology the role of a higher deity interacting with Anansi is fulfilled by Nyame (Lynch & Roberts, 2010, p. 93). The choice of deity by Gaiman here seems rather strange. Perhaps he genuinely did not know which god is from Akan mythology, or wanted to purposefully create an anachronistic effect, or (one hopes not) was indifferent. In any case, this showcases one of the possible pitfalls in cultural appropriation: misrepresentation. Parpola has dutifully translated both Mawu and the Singer (*Laulaja*) directly, thus transporting the mistake (if it indeed is one) into the TT. If we consider using Mawu instead of Nyame as cultural misappropriation on Gaiman's part, then it appears Parpola

has, through her translation, introduced cultural misappropriation into *Hämähäkkijumala* as well.

Anansi stories often incorporate other animal deities and quasi-deities, and this has carried over to *Anansi Boys* as well. The following appear in the novel: Bird Woman, Tiger, Monkey, Cheetah, Elephant, Snake, Hyena, Lion, Rhinoceros, Crocodile, Gazelle, Python, Rabbit, Scorpion, and Mouse. Most of these characters have only bit parts to play, with only the first three participating in the plot in a more consequential way. Gaiman's descriptions of the characters combine traditional elements from African and Afro-Caribbean stories with contemporary features of Western fiction. As an example of the latter, Snake is described as "wearing a natty green suit and a sharp hat with a snakeskin band around it. He wore snakeskin boots and a snakeskin belt." (*Anansi Boys*, p. 197). The description calls to mind a Wild West hustler or a Las Vegas high roller more than an African deity, in what must be (considering the blatantness) a conscious decision on Gaiman's part. Whether or not this constitutes cultural misappropriation or a playful usage of an appropriated element is hard to say; I would personally place it in the latter. Parpola's translations follow the strategies she has used with the other names. Each animal is translated directly to a Finnish equivalent. The only exception is Rhinoceros, which has been translated as *Virtahepo*, 'Hippopotamus', in what I assume is a mistake.

As we have seen above, the translator seems to have been unwilling to stray too far from the ST, which has led to plenty of direct translation and at times foreignization. The exceptions to this is the title of the novel, the reasons for which we have discussed above. However, domestication and foreignization seem not to have been the first thing on the translator's mind when translating the divine names in *Anansi Boys*: the strategies are employed variably, and at time I dare say haphazardly. This is somewhat odd, considering that as culturally appropriated elements, concentrating on domestication and foreignization strategies when translating them seems sensible.

4.2 Divine practices

The depiction of divine practices – rituals, magical feats and other divine phenomena – from another culture can be considered content appropriation (in that it uses an idea from

another culture) and in some cases subject appropriation (when the divine practice is depicted from the point of view of someone from that culture). Since many of the viewpoint characters in *Anansi Boys* are of Afro-Caribbean descent, and we often view rituals from their viewpoint, subject appropriation does seem to be taking place. However, many divine practices are witnessed by and described from the point of view of Fat Charlie, who identifies in the novel as an English person, and is noted by Gaiman as such. These cases are still content appropriation but do not necessarily constitute subject appropriation (although in the later parts of the novel, when Fat Charlie comes closer to his ancestry, the division blurs). This section is devoted to looking into the cultural appropriation employed by Gaiman in the divine practices of the novel, and their translations from a domestication and foreignization perspective.

In this section, I will be analyzing the divine practices of *Anansi Boys* and their translations in *Hämähäkkijumala*. The section analyzes three different divine practices that are common and important in the novel: 1) **magical singing**; 2) **god-voice, i.e. divine lying**; and 3) **visiting otherworldly places**. Each of these practices will be looked at through the character(s) in the novel who most partake in or are associated with the practice. The novel has a strict (but not entirely unbending) division of which character practices which rituals, with the deities and quasi-deities of the novel (Anansi, Spider, Tiger and so on) taking part in such activities more often. That said, the divine practices of more mundane characters are perhaps more interesting from a cultural misappropriation viewpoint. When an African-based god performs a miracle, you could argue that, since gods do not exist in our world, an author is not attributing such features directly to a culture. When such miracles are performed by mundane people, however, the appropriation hits closer to home. This section ignores divine practices that take place in the divine stories of the novel, as those are discussed in more detail in section 4.3.

The protagonist, Fat Charlie, begins the novel with little to do with divine practices. His faith or religious leanings are not discussed in the novel, but he shows a distinct dislike for the supernatural at the early parts of the novel, including dismissing the claim that his father is a god (*Anansi Boys*, p. 45). One of the main themes of the novel is his coming to terms with his heritage both in a mundane sense (“I am of African heritage”) and in a magical sense (“I am a god”). This is shown in the novel by his increasing acceptance of

the divine as the story progresses, as well as his eventual taking part in the divine practices themselves.

Fat Charlie, Spider and Mr. Nancy exhibit many of the same powers, including **magical singing**. This makes sense in the logic of the novel, what with the former two being children of the latter. Fat Charlie starts the novel off with a crippling fear of singing in public but increases in confidence and eventually conquers his fear – an important feat, considering his singing has magical powers. It can heal people (*Anansi Boys*, p. 435), let him find who he is looking for (*Anansi Boys*, p. 411), and even change the fabric of the world (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 434-437). Throughout the novel, singing is attributed a high value, both in a mundane sense and a magical sense, and it is conflated with storytelling in general. The following passage highlights the attitude the story has to songs, and is presented here along with its translation.

(1a) ST: Songs remain. They last. The right song can turn an emperor into a laughingstock, can bring down dynasties. A song can last long after the events and the people in it are dust and dreams and gone. That's the power of songs. (*Anansi Boys*, p. 4)

(1b) TT: Laulut jäävät. Ne kestävät. Oikea laulu voi muuttaa keisarin ivan kohteeksi, kaataa dynastioita. Laulu voi elää kauan sen jälkeen, kun sen kertomat tapahtumat ja ihmiset ovat tomua ja unia ja poissa. Siinä on laulujen mahti. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 9).

The strong association of song with Anansi is a somewhat surprising move from Gaiman. In studying the subject of Anansi, I have found little connection between Anansi and song. Anansi is strongly linked with storytelling, a related medium, songs have been written *about* Anansi, and some songs do appear in Anansi stories (e.g. Beckwith, 1924, p. 2), but in no source is it attested that Anansi is in particular a singer, that songs are his method of influencing the world, or that songs are an important part of Akan mythology. This clearly constitutes cultural misappropriation on Gaiman's part. A first-time reader of the novel who has no knowledge of Anansi from original cultural sources is very likely to incorrectly associate Anansi with song after reading the book. The author of this thesis certainly did.

Most of the material in *Anansi Boys* related to songs and singing is straightforward and does not require a tough decision between domestication and foreignization. As was the

case with divine names, Parpola translates material related to song directly, as we can see from example 1b above. When the situation calls for a decision between domestication and foreignization, she errs on the side of foreignization with direct transfers and foreignizing calques. She is helped in this by the similarity of the song elements presented in *Anansi Boys* to those of Finnish culture. There is no need to explain, say, karaoke to a Finnish person, after all.

When it comes to the names of real world songs, Parpola somewhat foreignizingly (although this is relatively common practice, so it might not constitute a conscious decision of strategy) uses direct transfer, leaving the names as-is. For example, “Strangers in the Night” and “What’s New Pussycat?” stay just that in *Hämähäkkijumala*. However, she translates “Yellow Bird” to *Keltainen lintu*, straying from this strategy. This is likely because of the song’s larger role in the story, but the lack of coherence in this one instance makes it stand out. A lot of the music listened to by the characters is performed by black musicians or from classically black genres of music. This is not explained (with explication, addition etc.) in *Hämähäkkijumala* and since the song titles will not necessarily tell anything about the song or its genre, this might leave this facet of the novel in the dark for a Finnish reader, who might be less familiar with ‘black music’. This is an interesting point: on one hand, the lack of domestication gives the Finnish reader less material to work with, and might leave them with a lacking understanding of the novel; but on the other, not labeling artists or songs as ‘black’ or ‘African’ makes the translation more in line with a black or Afro-Caribbean viewpoint (these groups having less need of labeling their music thus), and in this way avoids potential cultural misappropriation that could rise from excessive domestication.

The art of **god-voice** consists of being able to state things in such a way that they become true. This is illuminated in a passage in the novel (from which I have taken the name for the practice), during a time when Spider is pretending to be Fat Charlie:

(2a) ST: He wandered through the offices, and when anyone asked him who he was, he would say “I’m Fat Charlie Nancy,” and he’d say it in his **god-voice**, which would make whatever he said practically true. (*Anansi Boys*, p. 110; emphasis mine).

(2b) TT: Hän vaelteli toimistojen läpi, ja aina kun joku kysyi, kuka hän oli, hän vastasi: ”Olen Paksu Charlie Nancy,” ja hän lausui sen jumaläänellään, joka teki kaikesta hänen sanomastaan käytännössä totta. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 90).

This divine practice is used in various ways in the novel. Things can be named or renamed in such a way that they become what the name represents (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 5-6, 409), people can be forced to do things (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 150, 250), and people’s perceptions of events can be changed (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 221-222). While both Mr. Nancy and Fat Charlie (again, only later in the novel) are shown capable of employing god-voice, Spider is the character who practices it the most. Unlike singing, the ability to deceive and trick are explicitly features of Anansi in Akan folklore and in his later forms in the Caribbean, as we have discussed earlier, and in making this a feature of Anansi’s bloodline in the novel means that Gaiman has sought to faithfully represent the culture he is appropriating from. Most Anansi stories do not make his deceptions outright magical phenomena like they are in the novel but considering what sorts of lies Anansi gets away with in authentic Anansi stories, Gaiman is not far off.

A few interesting cases of domestication occur in *Hämähäkkijumala* when it comes to god-voice. Near the beginning of the novel, Mr. Nancy renames an award-winning dog. The dog, originally named Campbell’s Macinrory Arbuthnoth the Seventh, becomes Goofy when Mr. Nancy states:

(3a) ST: Hell of a goofy dog . . . Like that friend of Donald Duck’s. Hey, Goofy. (*Anansi Boys*, p. 6).

(3b) TT: Onpas siinä helkkarin hoopo koira . . . Vähän niin kuin se Aku Ankan kamu, Hessu Hopo. Hei, Hoopo. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 11).

Goofy’s surname in Finnish, *Hopo*, is similar to but not identical with *hoopo*, which translates to “goofy” or “silly”. This has led Parpola to use explication in translating the dialogue. This results in domestication, albeit of a fairly minor sort. What makes this interesting is that god-voice throughout the novel is slick, terse and to-the-point. This is a distinctive feature of god-voice to the point that you can tell a person is using their

power of diving lying when their dialogue becomes straightforward and laconic. By domesticating through explication, Parpola has made this instance of god-voice wordier and thus farther away from the ST.

Another interesting case occurs when Spider's use of god-voice is described about halfway through the book:

(4a) **ST:** Spider was used to being able to push reality around a little, just a little but that was always enough." (*Anansi Boys*, p. 220).

(4b) **TT:** Spider oli tottunut käsittelemään todellisuutta pikkuisen, pikkuisen vain, mutta se oli aina riittänyt. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 180).

Translating "push reality around" to *käsitellä* is an odd choice, one that cannot be explained with a need for domestication. *Käsitellä* translates to English as "handle" or "manipulate" and comes from the Finnish word for "hand", *käsi*. Perhaps the fact that most pushing is done by hand has led Parpola to her word selection, but it does not appear as playful or even have wholly the same meaning as the original. Since instances of description on how god-voice works are few and far between in the novel, an inefficient translation (which I believe this one to be) in any one of them gives a TC reader only a partial picture into the phenomenon. This means a faithfully representative culturally appropriated element – deception in Anansi stories – is left incompletely communicated.

Many of the deities in *Anansi Boys* are capable of **visiting otherworldly places**. Characters like Spider (and later on Fat Charlie) can do this effortlessly: at one point, it is described as "[turning] in a direction that wasn't usually there" (*Anansi Boys*, p. 432). While these divine characters have this ability, visiting otherworldly places is also done (through far more effort) by more mundane characters, namely Callyanne Higgler and Louella Dunwiddy. Neither visit otherworldly places themselves but perform rituals that allow others (Fat Charlie in both cases) to visit "the beginning of the world" (*Anansi Boys*, p. 204), an otherworldly realm of the gods. It is these occurrences of visiting otherworldly places that stand out from a cultural appropriation perspective, as they are very much rituals, and they are performed by members of a culture that is not Gaiman's.

Both of these visitations are triggered by an intricate ritual performed by a number of people around a table. The first time around (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 190-194), the ritual is described in more detail, and later on in the novel (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 393-394) is repeated

with less description. The ritual consists of a number of people making noises (some hum, some hiss, some buzz and so on) around a table with four black candles, a design made out of salt, a bowl of alcohol mixed with specific herbs, and four specific sorts of earth. At the conclusion of the ritual, a person (Fat Charlie) is transported into the realm of the gods.

Both of these transportation scenes are comedic scenes, with the participants arguing with each other, replacing ritual ingredients with more everyday items and otherwise treating the ritual with little gravitas. The following passage, taken from the first instance of this divine practice, showcases the tone of these scenes excellently:

(5a) ST: “Now,” said Mrs Dunwiddy, “the devil-grass, the St John the Conqueror root, and the love-lies-bleeding.”

Mrs Bustamonte rummaged in her shopping bag and took out a small glass jar. “It’s mixed herbs,” she explained. “I thought it would be all right.”

“Mixed herbs!” said Mrs Dunwiddy. “Mixed herbs!” (*Anansi Boys*, p. 191).

(5b) TT: “Nyt,” rouva Dunwiddy sanoi, ”pirunruoho, Johannes Valloittajan juuri sekä tulirevonhätä.”

Rouva Bustamonte kaiveli ostoskassiaan ja veti esiin pienen lasipurkin. ”Siinä on yrttisekoitusta,” hän selitti. ”Ajattelin, että se kävisi.”

”Yrttisekoitusta!” rouva Dunwiddy puuskahti. ”Yrttisekoitusta!” (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 156).

While the scenes may be subjectively comedic, they are problematic from a cultural appropriation viewpoint. The ritual has the trappings of a stereotypical voodoo ritual, with libations, drumming and chanting, but does not accurately seek to depict one. Nor could it, since bodily visiting otherworldly realms is not a feature of any of the voodoo religions. Furthermore, the comedic bumbling of the participants in the rituals trivializes it, which means that in some small way, it also trivializes the people participating and their (in this case mostly imaginary) faith. You could quite convincingly argue that as the ritual does not attempt to faithfully depict the cultures and religions of the people involved, no cultural misappropriation takes place, but I disagree. When representing a culture from that culture’s perspective (subject appropriation), trivializing their divine practices seems unjustifiably offensive (Young, 2010, p. 26) as the culture is trivialized by proxy. It does not matter if the practices themselves are fictional. Indeed, making up practices could be

considered to increase the misappropriative element. Then again, the novel's light tone means most of the characters and events are treated with a similar comedic feel, lessening the blow considerably.

This brings us to Parpola's translation of visiting otherworldly places. Parpola's translation is as direct here as it has been with divine names and the rest of the divine practices, favoring direct transfer and especially calques. This is neatly showcased in the translation of "devil-grass" and "St John the Conqueror root" in examples 5a and 5b. The former is translated with a calque (perhaps for purposes of tone) instead of as *sormiheinä*, a more correct translation, and the former receives a calque as well as the root does not have an established name in Finnish.

Her translation seeks to preserve the comedic effect of the original, with choices of word like *kökötti*, *pörisivät* and *mutaklöntin*, which appear (in this author's opinion) comedic to a Finnish reader, especially contrasted with the mock-somber tone of the scene. Some of the characters here (as they do elsewhere in the novel as well) speak in an approximation of AAVE in Finnish, albeit an unsystematic one. *Minä* ("I") and the more colloquial *mä* are used interchangeably instead of systematically, as is the case with other pronouns. This does create an effect of informal speech, but in no way does it make a reader immediately recognize the speakers as black. The same sort of speech pattern could be used in a Finnish novel for just about anyone. This in particular can not be said to be Parpola's fault. Finnish does not have an established equivalent for AAVE – which is not to say there are no black people in Finland, or that they do not speak in their own style – and attempting to fashion an equivalent from scratch could lead to a very stereotypical or racist translation.

This does not mean that Parpola's translation is not problematic. The translation is faithful to the ST first and foremost and seemingly not at all to the culture behind it. If we are to accept the conclusion that the two transportation scenes in *Anansi Boys* are cultural misappropriation, then Parpola's translation carries over that misappropriation. But does she have a choice in the matter? Can a translator make such drastic changes to a TT that they create an ST with a different meaning altogether? In this instance it seems unlikely, considering that using, say, omission to fade out misappropriative elements would

entirely change the tone of the original. These are questions far too large to even attempt to answer in this thesis, so I will not hazard to.

The above analysis shows us that Gaiman's depiction of divine practices in *Anansi Boys* are cultural appropriation, and in some cases (especially those parts dealing with visiting otherworldly places) fall under misappropriation. This contrasts with the divine names of section 4.1 and the divine stories of section 4.3, categories where Gaiman's appropriation is, as I see it, less harmful or harmless. Parpola has chosen to translate directly and often with a foreignizing bent, preferring the translation strategies of direct transfer and calque. From the perspective of this thesis, the most interesting feature of her translation are the domesticated strategies: the translation of "Yellow Bird", "Goofy" and other cases discussed above. As I have outlined above, these domestications have in most cases done the translation harm, and in some cases stray towards cultural misappropriation. In addition, in at least one case (the preserving of English song titles) foreignization seems to have had a positive effect on the cultural appropriation of the translation. This seems to align with Venuti's thoughts on the "ethnocentric reduction" vs. "ethnodeviant pressure" of domestication and foreignization (Venuti, 1995, p. 20).

4.3 Divine stories

Recounting the divine stories of a culture not your own, in a style and tone that is not your culture's, is an appropriation of another culture's voice, and thus subject appropriation. The narrational tone heard throughout *Anansi Boys* does harken somewhat to the storytelling tradition of the cultures Anansi is from, but it is in the divine stories presented in the novel that this storytelling most shows. *Anansi Boys* contains three such divine stories: **Anansi's Grandmother** (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 51-54), **Anansi and the Tar-Baby** (ibid., pp. 133-136), and **Anansi and Bird** (ibid., pp. 214-216). Only the third of these is explicitly titled in the novel; the first two I have titles myself for clarity. Each of the three divine stories are based on, or is a variation of, an actual Anansi story told in the Caribbean. Throughout the section, I will be referring to authentic Anansi stories recounted in *Jamaica Anansi stories* (Beckwith, 1924) as a comparison for Gaiman's

versions. I will be outlining the stories briefly in the order given above, and then analyzing them and their translations.

The first of the three stories is **Anansi's Grandmother** (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 51-54), which corresponds to the story "Anansi kills his Grandmother" recounted in *Jamaica Anansi stories* (Beckwith, 1924, p. 164). Gaiman's version of the story has Anansi's grandmother die of natural causes, after which Anansi tricks a shopkeeper into giving him whiskey and other goods and valuables for free by getting the shopkeeper to think he killed her. Anansi then happens upon Tiger, who also wants free goods; Anansi tells a half-truth, that a shopkeeper gave him things for free because he brought his dead grandmother over. Tiger proceeds to kill his wife's mother (his grandmother, it is stated, is already dead) and attempts to sell the dead body unsuccessfully.

The version recounted in *Jamaica Anansi stories* is similar in many ways but differs at a few key points. First of all, Anansi is the one to take his grandmother's life ("Anansi kill him old grandmother" [Beckwith, 1924, p. 164]) with the explicit intention of tricking a shopkeeper into giving him money. Also, while Anansi again tells the same half-truth and Tiger attempts to sell his grandmother, he also tells Tiger not to ("So Anansi said to Tiger he shouldn't do anyt'ing like dat; too foolish!" [ibid.]). The authentic story has Anansi as a far more antagonistic and unlikeable character, at least from an Anglosphere perspective. Gaiman's version of the story further has the shopkeeper described as a "hasty-tempered man" (*Anansi Boys*, p. 51), and has the Tiger threaten Anansi's life (ibid., p. 53), to make Anansi more sympathetic.

Making changes like these is understandable from a storytelling point of view. This story appears at an early part of the novel, where Gaiman wants to establish the character. Describing him in a negative light might turn the reader against him. This idea is supported by the fact that the latter two stories show Anansi in a more negative (or at least ambivalent) light – at that point, the character is already established, and can be rounded out with less positive features. However, the changes also alter the character of Anansi. The story is told in a different way to the original to align with Anglosphere expectations. Anansi becomes a serf to the story, if you will.

The language of the two versions of the story is a noteworthy element for this thesis. As we have seen from the passages given above, the original as recounted in *Jamaica Anansi stories* is in a thick Jamaican Creole. Gaiman's version does away with this in part, which makes sense: the original is outright difficult to decipher at parts. Gaiman does use a conversational tone, with passages like "he starts a-crying and a-wailing" (*Anansi Boys*, p. 52) and "don't you tell anyone I done this" (*ibid.*), which gives the story the trappings of an oral story. The use of a register different from the original is justified and cannot be said to constitute cultural misappropriation. Oral folktales are a variable genre, and it is in their nature to be told in different ways. Beckwith references this in the preface of *Jamaica Anansi stories* when she says the stories "are set down without polish or adornment, as nearly as possible as they were told to me" (Beckwith, 1924, p. xi). A different storyteller would likely have told the story differently, and in this Gaiman is no different from other storytellers.

Parpola seeks to imitate the down-to-earth style of Gaiman's story in her translation. She keeps the present tense that is used throughout the Anansi's Grandmother story. This is a sensible choice, as the present tense is a signifying feature of divine stories in the novel: it is used in every occurrence. It also gives the passage an air of immediacy that is a feature of face-to-face speech, in the ST and, thanks to Parpola's translation, in the TT as well.

Parpola uses an interesting method to translate the storytelling tone of the passage. She domesticates the story into a Finnish fairytale or animal fable, similar to the ones read to and by young children. The difference to the rest of the text becomes apparent when we compare a passage from the divine story to a passage from elsewhere in the novel (both chosen at random):

(6a) Divine story: Kärää siinä Anansi isoäitinsä kalmoa kottikärryissä koko aamun, niin saapuu kylään ja tuumii: *minun on saatava viskiä*. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 48).

(6b) Non-divine story: Vasta viimeisen virren aikana, kun Paksun Charlien äiti oli lipunut viimeiselle matkalleen liukuhinnaa pitkin, Paksu Charlie huomasi osapuilleen itsensä ikäisen miehen, joka seiso kappelin takaosassa. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 22).

In a sense, the original divine story in *Anansi Boys* has a touch of animal fable to it, although it is more in line with stories about cultural heroes (e.g. Väinämöinen). Parpola uses reverse word order in many parts where the ST does not have reverse word order or any other distinctive features (e.g. *Menee Anansi sisään* for “he goes in”, *Kärrää siinä Anansi* for “he’s passing through town”), often precedes names with the pronoun *se*, “that” (e.g. *se Anansi, sillä Tiikerillä*), and employs archaic and unusual, often slightly comical words (e.g. *uinuu, kalmo, talonräyhkä*).

These strategies are strongly domesticating in that they exchange a Finnish voice and tone for an appropriated Afro-Caribbean one. They also create a surprisingly convincing tone of an anecdote or yarn told face-to-face to the reader, although this is of course a subjective point. This is extremely interesting from a domestication and foreignization viewpoint: Parpola’s domestication has led the Anansi’s Grandmother story in the TT being less appropriative of Afro-Caribbean culture than the original (in voice; the subject matter is still very much appropriated). The translation remains faithful to the ST (an oral story about a certain event) while simultaneously changing quite a bit about it.

The second of three divine stories in the novel is **Anansi and the Tar-Baby** (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 133-136). The story is a variation on the Tar-Baby story which is likely to be familiar with most Western readers. Three versions are given in *Jamaica Anansi stories*: “The Escape from Tiger” (Beckwith, 1924, p. 23); “The Substitute” (ibid., p. 24); and “The Grave” (ibid., p. 25-26). All three share the main component of a figure of tar that Anansi gets entangled with: in the first, Anansi is caught by Tiger’s tar trap, and escapes by tricking Tiger into a fire; in the second, Tacoomah does the catching, and Anansi tricks Goat to take his place in the tar; and in the third, Anansi pretends to be dead to rob his family field and the tar trap is set out by his children. Of the three, Gaiman’s version most resembles the third: Anansi pretends to die and robs his own field in secret and his children set out a tar baby to catch the thief. The difference is that in Gaiman’s version, Anansi does die in the end, after getting entangled with the tar baby.

This time, Gaiman’s version of the divine story is more closely related to the original idea than was the case with Anansi’s Grandmother. As stated earlier, this story has Anansi in a more obviously villainous role and gets punished for it at the end – note that in the

mythology of *Anansi Boys*, dying is merely a setback for a god. Again, Gaiman uses a style reminiscent of oral storytelling, with passages like “hits him, bash, right in the face” throughout. Afro-Caribbean influences are more present in this story than in the previous one, in both setting (farming peas, breadfruit trees) and language (“weeny-weedy-weak voice”, “lickle pot” [although “lickle” is used in Britain as well and is usually spelled “likkle” in Jamaican Creole]). Gaiman makes the divine story serve the purposes of the novel but stays faithful to the original in both content and to some extent in style. The following passage showcases both the language and the style, while its translation contains features worth discussing.

(7a) ST: So Anansi lay down on his bed and he sighed, long and loud, and his wife and his sons all came a-running. “I’m a-dying,” said Anansi, in this little teeny-weedy-weak voice, “and my life is all over and done.” (*Anansi Boys*, p. 133).

(7b) TT: Niinpä Anansi pani maata ja huokasi, huokasi pitkään ja raskaasti, ja hänen vaimonsa ja poikansa juoksivat paikalle. ”Minä kuolen,” sanoi Anansi raihmaisella, ruikuttavalla, riutuneella äänellä, ”jo tuli noutaja.” (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 110).

Parpola’s choice of strategy here is identical to the one used with Anansi’s Grandmother. With archaic and unusual word choices (*noutaja*, *konsanaan*), reverse word order and use of the present tense, she maintains the tone of a Finnish fairytale, although this time the animal fable elements are more subdued, perhaps because Tiger does not feature in this story. The extensive domestication serves to enforce this effect, although it is somewhat diminished by a few foreignizing translations here and there this time around. For example, Parpola has directly transferred “penny” into the TT instead of translating it to *penni* or outright using a superordinate term such as *kolikko* or *raha*.

The divine story in the ST has a bit of confusion with tense, as Gaiman uses past tense in the beginning to set up the scene, but also has a few sentences in the past tense amid present-tense content. This could be one way in which Gaiman seeks to create an oral tone, although it does create some confusion. Parpola has often, but not always, translated into the present tense (e.g. *sanovat vaimo ja lapset* for “said Anansi’s wife and children”), except at the beginning. It would seem that she has tried to ‘correct’ the tense confusion, but she too has left a few sentences in the past tense. It could also be that she has translated here without too much thought, which would explain the mixing of the two tenses. At any

rate, both the ST and the TT are made somewhat harder to follow by this confusion. While the use of tense could be deliberate on Gaiman's part in his attempt to create oral-seeming text, it is certainly not a feature of the original stories. Many stories in *Jamaica Anansi stories*, including The Substitute mentioned above, mark character speech with just "say" without inflection (e.g. "Anansi say", "Tacomah say"), but this is not an indicator of present tense, but rather a feature of Jamaican Creole.

The third divine story in *Anansi Boys* is **Anansi and Bird** (*Anansi Boys*, pp. 214-216), which is the only divine story that has a heading. It corresponds to the "Shut up in the Pot" story found in *Jamaica Anansi stories* (Beckwith, 1924, p. 21). Gaiman's story has Anansi lie to Bird that he has found an herbal bath that cure all ails. Bird has intercourse with Anansi to negotiate access to the bath, after which Anansi traps her in the bath – actually a cooking pot – and boils her alive. He then eats Bird with his family. The original story is somewhat simpler but very similar: Anansi tricks Tiger and Tacomah into giving his family food, claiming that they are famished, but is caught in the lie. When the two confront Anansi about this, he tricks them into the cooking pot, and again Anansi's family is fed.

There are a few key differences between Gaiman's story and the one in *Jamaica Anansi stories*. Usually, the characters in genuine Anansi stories are interchangeable. They are dupes for Anansi to deceive, they receive no defining features or description except for a name (which admittedly is often descriptive, Tiger being an example), and tend to end up poorly in the end. Gaiman's stories, both this one and the two before it, stray from this mold because he is writing a novel instead of telling a short tale. The divine stories in *Anansi Boys* seek to establish characters, so if he did not describe the 'antagonist' in his Anansi and Bird, the story would serve no purpose in the larger context of the novel. So Bird is described: she is violently hungry ("when Bird was hungry she ate many things . . . and Bird, she was always hungry" [*Anansi Boys*, p. 214]), immensely curious, and antagonistic to Anansi and his family. This ties into the larger story, where Bird Woman is an opposing force to the main characters, and these are her features. In the interest of the format of a novel, Gaiman makes an oral story do things an oral story usually does not, which requires changing how such stories are told. Gaiman practices style

appropriation in using divine stories in his work, but does he in fact only borrow parts of the style instead of trying to faithfully replicate it?

There is an interesting detail in Gaiman's *Anansi and Bird* that suggests that this is not the case, and that he does align his writing with the style of authentic Anansi stories. At the very end of the divine story, he acknowledges the variable, changing nature of Anansi stories, and perhaps stories in general. He does this in the voice of the narrator, but one would probably not be far off the mark in claiming that this is Gaiman's view as well:

There's another version of the story where they talk Anansi into the cookpot too. The stories are all Anansi's, but he doesn't always come out ahead. (*Anansi Boys*, p. 216).

As we have seen with *Anansi and the Tar-Baby* above, the original Anansi stories do not come from a uniform mold. Indeed, *Jamaica Anansi stories* represents only the Anansi stories of one culture, and even then, only those collected by Beckwith. In varying the story, and in acknowledging the existence of alternative versions, Gaiman is in fact faithfully appropriating not just the content but the style of the culture he loans from.

Parpola, however, does not loan from Afro-Caribbean culture, nor indeed from Anansi stories in general. Her translation is similar to the two discussed above in that it is very direct and creates a tone of a Finnish fairytale. At times, the reverse word order and archaic vocabulary becomes so vigorous that the translations become nearly biblical:

(8a) ST: Why you carrying on like a madman, Anansi? (*Anansi Boys*, p. 214).

(8b) TT: Miksi, Anansi, reuhdot kuin mieleltäsi vajaa? (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 176).

(9a) ST: spiders and birds aren't never going to be friends (*Anansi Boys*, p. 216).

(9b) TT: eikä hämähäkeistä ja linnuista ole kuunaan tovereita tuleva (*Hämähäkkijumala*, p. 178).

In both cases Parpola might be attempting to translate the colloquiality of the original ("why you carrying on", "aren't never"), but in my opinion misses the mark.

This particular divine story features some interjections, the translations of which are an interesting case. Interjections, as a characteristic feature of spoken language (Norrick, 2009), are reasonable in what is meant to represent an oral story, although this story's counterpart in *Jamaica Anansi stories* does not feature any. The interjections in Anansi and Bird are "Whoo!" and "Whee!", both meant to convey excitement. Their translations, however, are *Huiii!* and *Hueee!*, respectively. The first is very close to Finnish *hui*, which usually conveys (mild) fright. The latter is entirely unrecognizable in Finnish. It seems that Parpola has thought the spoken-aloud sounds of the originals are more important than the content, perhaps to maintain the oral style, and attempted to translate with direct transfer in a foreignizing fashion to maintain the sound. I believe this to have a contrary effect: the translated interjections stand out in the TT and make the divine story's translation less oral and authentic, as no Finnish storyteller is likely to use either interjection in this context – or with the latter, in any context.

The divine stories of *Anansi Boys* are where Gaiman's cultural appropriation is the most faithful to the original culture, and somewhat ironically where some of Parpola's greatest stumbles in relation to domestication and foreignization have occurred. Parpola's extensive domestication of the divine stories raises questions about who the translator 'owes allegiance' to. Parpola's translations work to diminish the cultural appropriation present in the ST, but is this a good thing? Should a translator translate an ST and its appropriation how the author would want it translated, or the publisher, or should they only keep the recipients in mind? Could a translator's allegiance lie with the source culture that an ST borrows from? This ties into the skopos theory posited by Reiß and Vermeer (1984), which will not be discussed in this thesis as it is not the subject under study.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, I have sought to answer the question of how the cultural appropriation of the divine is translated in Neil Gaiman's *Anansi Boys*. Anansi is still not Gaiman's god, but we have gained some understanding of the methods which he has used to make him his god, and the ways in which he has employed Anansi's culture. Using the theories, methods and materials established in chapters 2 and 3, I have analyzed Anansi and the other divine elements I identified in the novel, in an attempt to see how Parpola's translation treated those elements in domestication/foreignization terms.

The results are somewhat mixed. Parpola has employed both domestication and foreignization as strategies in translating the divine, at times systematically and at others non-systematically, treating certain elements as targets for domestication while others received a foreignizing touch. Several observations about the implications of using domesticating and on the other hand foreignizing strategies were made in the analysis. They are reiterated here, both as a sort of *summa summarum* and to suggest avenues for further research on the subject.

One point that rose up in the analysis more than once was the idea of 'fighting' or avoiding cultural misappropriation with foreignizing translation. Support for this idea did come up, for example in the appropriation of song titles and their subsequent foreignizing direct transfer translations (in all but one case) by Parpola. Additionally, there were signs that in some cases, domestication can allow the cultural misappropriation of the ST to carry over to the TT. This is an interesting point in that this is in effect the very idea Venuti was espousing in his *The translator's invisibility* (1995). Further research from a domestication/foreignization perspective into novels and other works of fiction that have cultural (mis)appropriation could solidify this proposition. Then again, the choice of such strategy might not always be in a translator's hands.

This brings us to our next avenue of further study: the role of other agents in choice of domesticating or foreignizing strategy. The translator is of course the person who creates the domesticating or foreignizing translation, but as I theorized with the title of the book, the choice between the two might potentially lie in someone else's hands. This becomes especially interesting when culturally appropriative works are being translated: can a

translator be loyal to the culture the author is appropriating from? In some cases, this could be the ethical choice, but is it one a translator is able to make?

One more potential source of further research is the carrying-over of a foreignizing feel. *Anansi Boys* is a novel that often creates a foreignizing feel (for example in choice of character names) in the reader. Is a foreignizing translation of a textual element really foreignization if the original has the same foreignizing feel through being from a culture different from the author's and/or the intended reader's? We have also seen that in some cases cultural misappropriation can be carried over, for example in Parpola's choice of using direct transfer as a translation strategy with *Mawu*. Further studies could clarify the mechanics of carrying-over of both foreignizing elements and of cultural (mis)appropriation in translated texts.

It is important to note that, as far as this thesis shows, neither domestication or foreignization is in some way the "correct" strategy for translating this specific novel, either in an ethical sense or a quality sense. At times, domestication works in the TT's favor from an 'avoiding misappropriation' viewpoint (e.g. divine stories to fairytales), while at other times it is less justifiable (e.g. translations of god-voice). At other times, foreignization has the best effect appropriation-wise for the TT (e.g. translation of song titles) while at others it works against it (e.g. carrying-over of misappropriation in translating *Mawu*). This shows that Venuti's militant support for foreignizing translation is not entirely justified, in that it sometimes does exactly what he seeks to avoid, while domestication could have worked better for the text in making sure cultural appropriation does not turn to misappropriation. At the end of the day, domestication and foreignization are strategies with their own benefits and problems and should not be employed just for what they represent – but they do have a cultural and ethical element that should not be ignored. This observation can certainly be made about *Hämähäkkijumala*, and I think it can be generalized into translation of fiction in general.

I hope this MA Thesis widens the horizons of its reader when it comes to domestication and foreignization. While the strategies are firmly in the field of translation studies, I believe their study, and the study of translation in general, can benefit from interdisciplinary research in general and from the application of social science theory in

particular. A singular qualitative case study like this thesis can only begin to scratch the surface of domestication and foreignization as agents in cultural appropriation, but hopefully it will not remain the only study of its kind. In a world where cultural appropriation is the foundation of many of the things we consider our culture, and where translation is increasingly common precisely because of the influx of different sorts of culture, the study of how exactly the translation of cultural appropriation takes place is incredibly valuable. The lack of serious, large-scale research into the phenomenon is baffling: perhaps translation studies can help begin the process of looking into it in more detail.

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LYHENNELMÄ

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Englannin kääntäminen

Ville-Veikko Jylhämäki: *Compé Anansi: Translating the cultural appropriation of the divine in Neil Gaiman's Anansi Boys*

Pro gradu -tutkielma, 52 s, suomenkielinen lyhennelmä 12 s

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Johdanto

Anansi Boys, Neil Gaimanin kirjoittama fantasiaromaani, ilmestyi vuonna 2005 ja kertoo mustaihoisesta englantilaisesta miehestä, joka löytää uudelleen perheensä ja ylimaalliset juurensa – miehen isä on Länsi-Afrikkalaisen mytologian Anansi-jumala (Marshall, 2012, s. 22). Kirjoittaessaan kulttuurista johon ei itse kuulu Gaiman kulttuuriapproprioi tätä kulttuuria. Kulttuuriappropriatio tarkoittaa muun kuin oman kulttuurin käsitteiden, symboleiden ja esineiden käyttämistä (Schneider, 2003, s. 218). Onko Gaiman oikeutettu käyttämään toisista kulttuureista lainattua materiaalia luodessaan omia tuotoksiaan?

Tämä tutkimus ei pyri vastaamaan näin valtavaan kysymykseen, vaan lähestyy *Anansi Boysia* kääntämisen näkökulmasta. Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastelen *Anansi Boysia* ja sen vuonna 2009 ilmestynyttä, Inka Parpolan kirjoittamaa käännöstä *Hämähäkkijumala*. Tarkastelen kirjaa ja sen käännöstä kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen käännösstrategioiden näkökulmasta ja pyrin selvittämään, **miten kirjan ylimaallisten elementtien kulttuuriappropriatio on käännetty**. Onko Parpola kääntänyt kulttuuriappropriation kotouttavalla vai vieraannuttavalla käännösstrategialla, vai käyttääkö hän strategioita vaihtelevasti? Millainen vaikutus käännösstrategialla on itse käännökseen?

Tämä lyhennelmä on jaettu kolmeen lukuun, ja jättää välistä gradun kolmannen luvun (metodi ja materiaali) sekä viidennen luvun (loppupäätelmät). Ensimmäistä johdantolukua seuraa teorialuku, jossa selitetään tutkimuksen kannalta tärkeimmät teoriat: kulttuuriappropriatio (päälähteenä Young, 2010) sekä kotouttaminen ja vieraannuttaminen (päälähteinä Paloposki, 2011 ja Venuti, 1995). Teoriaa seuraa

analyysiluku, jossa tarkastelen ylimaallisten elementtien kulttuuriappropriaatiota *Anansi Boys*issa ja näiden elementtien käännöksiä *Hämähäkkijumalassa*. Olen jakanut kirjoissa esiintyvät ylimaalliset elementit kolmeen kategoriaan, joita käsitellään analyysissä: 1) ylimaalliset nimet; 2) ylimaalliset rituaalit; ja 3) ylimaalliset tarinat. Tarkastelen kulttuuriapproprioitujen ylimaallisten elementtien käännöksiä sekä neutraalisti käytännön näkökulmasta (lähteenä Paloposki, 2011) että eettisestä näkökulmasta (lähteenä Venuti, 1995).

Tämä pro gradu on poikkitieteellinen tutkimus, joka yhdistää yhteiskuntatiedettä (kulttuuriappropriatio) ja käännöstiedettä (kotouttaminen ja vieraannuttaminen). Uskon tämän yhdistelmän olevan toimiva ja antoisa, sillä molemmat tieteenalat keskittyvät kulttuuriin ja kommunikaatioon. Olen kuitenkin itse käännöstieteilijä, ja yhteiskuntatiede on tässä tutkimuksessa toissijaisessa asemassa: pääpaino on kääntämisessä.

Teoria

Toinen tämän tutkimuksen pääteorioista on kulttuuriappropriatio. Schneider määrittelee **kulttuuriappropriation** seuraavasti: “the taking – from a culture that is not one’s own – of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artefacts, history and ways of knowledge” (Schneider, 2003, s. 218). Termiä käytetään varsin vapaasti, ja usein täysin erilaisten ilmiöiden kuvaamiseen. Tässä tutkimuksessa käytän James O. Youngin määritelmää ja jaottelua (Young, 2010). Youngin näkemyksessä kulttuuriappropriatio voi olla ja usein onkin täysin harmiton käytäntö, joka voi synnyttää esteettisesti merkittäviä taideteoksia (ibid., s. 2). Young jaottelee kulttuuriappropriation kolmeen eri kategoriaan ja kahteen alakategoriaan (ibid., s. 5-6):

- Esineappropriatio (*object appropriation*) – toisen kulttuurin fyysisen taidesineen itselleen ottaminen
- Sisältöappropriatio (*content appropriation*) – toisesta kulttuurista kotoisin olevien vaikutteiden käyttäminen
 - Tyyliappropriatio (*style appropriation*) – toiselle kulttuurille tyyllillisten elementtien käyttäminen

- Aiheappropriaatio (*motif appropriation*) – toisesta kulttuurista kotoisin olevien aiheiden ja teemojen käyttäminen
- Subjektiappropriaatio (*subject appropriation*) – potsem kulttuurien kuvaaminen näiden kulttuurien näkökulmasta; kutsutaan myös ääniappropriaatioksi (*voice appropriation*)

Young erottaa toisistaan suotuisan, vahinkoa aiheuttamattoman kulttuuriappropriaation ja negatiivisen, vahinkoa aiheuttavan kulttuuriappropriaation. Kyse on jälkimmäisestä kun 1) appropriatio aiheuttaa kohtuutonta vahinkoa; tai 2) appropriatio on kohtuuttoman loukkaavaa (Young, 2010, p. 18). Tässä tutkimuksessa aion viitata harmittomaan kulttuuriappropriatioon **kulttuuriappropriationa** ja vahinkoa aiheuttavaan kulttuuriappropriatioon **kulttuurisena omimisena**.

Kulttuuriappropriaation lisäksi tässä tutkimuksessa käytetään **kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen** käännsstrategioiden teoriaa. Kotouttaminen ja vieraannuttaminen ovat kattotermejä, globaaleja käännsstrategioita, jotka kattavat lukuisia paikallisia käännsstrategioita. Tässä tutkimuksessa käsittelen kotouttamista ja vieraannuttamista *Hämähäkkijumalassa* kahdesta eri näkökulmasta: Paloposken (2011) esittämästä puolueettomasta, teknisestä näkökulmasta; sekä Venutin (1995) esittämästä eettisestä näkökulmasta. Tämä kaksiperspektiivinen käsittelytapa mahdollistaa kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen syvällisemmän tarkastelun.

Outi Paloposki (2011) on kirjoittanut läpikotaisen artikkelin kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen historiasta ja käytöstä. Kotouttaminen tarkoittaa ”kulttuurikontekstin tai kulttuurille ominaisten termien sopeuttamista” (ibid., s. 40; käänns oma). Kotouttamisen tarkoitus on tehdä käännsksestä lukijalleen yhtä lähestyttävä kuin alkuperäinen on lukijalleen. Joissain tapauksissa kotouttaminen saattaa pyrkiä antamaan saman kokemuksen kuin alkuperäinen antaisi. Kotouttavasti käännsnettäessä on kuitenkin mahdollista, että alkuperäisen kirjoittajan aihe ja/tai arvot jäävät kääntämättä.

Kotouttamisen vastapari vieraannuttaminen tarkoittaa ”alkuperäisen kulttuurikontekstin säilyttämistä miljöiden, nimien yms. osalta” (ibid., s. 40; käänns oma). Alkuperäisen tekstin sisältö ja tyyli säilyvät, mutta vaikutus ei välttämättä. Jos käännsksen lukijan

kulttuuri eroaa merkittävästi alkuperäistekstin kulttuurikontekstista, voi käännöksen lukijalta jäädä saamatta alkuperäisen tarjoama kokemus.

Tässä tutkimuksessa kotouttamista ja vieraannuttamista käsitellään myös eettisestä näkökulmasta, joka tulee Lawrence Venutilta, kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen kantaisältä (1995). Venuti perusti esittelemänsä käännösstrategiat Friedrich Schleiermacherin vuonna 1813 tunnistamiin käännösstrategioihin. Venutin strategioihin liittäminen eettinen puoli erottaa hänen ajatuksensa muista tutkijoista, jotka käsittelevät kotouttamista ja vieraannuttamista neutraalimmin, käytännön strategioina käytännön ongelmiin. Venutin näkemyksessä vieraannuttaminen on moraalisesti oikein käännettäessä isommasta, vaikutusvaltaisemmasta kulttuurista pienempään, vähemmän vaikutusvaltaiseen kulttuuriin päin. Venutin mukaan vieraannuttamalla marginaalinen vähemmistökulttuuri voi torjua vahvemman kulttuurin (Venuti, 1995, s. 148). Vastaavasti hän kokee kotouttamisen alistumisena vahvemmalle kulttuurille ja sen kielelle (ibid., s. 308).

Venutin näkemykset kotouttamisesta ja vieraannuttamisesta ovat mielenkiintoisia eettisen näkökulmansa johdosta, koska ne liittyvät suoraan kulttuuriappropriatioon. Kun Venuti esittelee Strabon ja Tarchettin kuvaukset arabikulttuurista ja hylkää sitten molemmat Eurooppa-keskeisinä, kuvailee hän erinomaisesti kulttuurisen omimisen, vaikkei tätä termiä käytäkään (Venuti, 1995, s. 159). Mielestäni on huomionarvoista, että Venutin näkemys hegemonisesta englanninkielisestä valtapiiristä 'nykymaailmassa' on täsmälleen yhtä ajankohtainen tänä päivänä kuin vuonna 1995.

Analyysi

Tässä analyysiluvussa käsittelen järjestyksessä kolmea *Anansi Boys*issa tunnistamaani ylimaallisten elementtien kategoriaa: **ylimaallisia nimiä**, **ylimaallisia rituaaleja** ja **ylimaallisia tarinoita**.

Ylimaalliset nimet

Ylimaalliset nimet käsittävät muihin kuin Gaimanin omaan kulttuuriin kuuluvien ylimaallisten olentojen (ennen kaikkea jumalten) nimet ja tittelit. Gaiman harjoittaa tyyliappropriaatiota lainatessaan nimiä ja titteleitä muista kulttuureista. Lista kaikista *Anansi Boys*issa esiintyvistä ylimaallisista nimistä ja niiden käännöksistä löytyy gradusta sivulta 25.

Tärkein ylimaallisista nimistä kirjassa on Anansi, päähahmon isä. Alkuperäinen Anansi-jumaluus omaa lukuisia nimiä, joten on mielenkiintoista, että Gaiman on valinnut juuri tämän kirjoitusasun. Gaiman tuntuu kuitenkin tunnustavan hahmon moninimisyyden ja myös soveltaa sitä, sillä kirjassa Anansi esiintyy monilla muillakin nimillä, muun muassa *Compé Anansina* ja *Anansi the Spiderina*. Parpola on kääntänyt Anansin ja tämän muut nimet käyttäen käännösstrategianaan vierassanan käyttöä. Valinta ei ole yllättävä, joskin se on mielenkiintoinen kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen näkökulmasta. *Anansi Boys*issa ei koskaan kerrota sanan *Anansi* tarkoittavan hämähäkkiä. Kääntämällä nimen suoraan Parpola vie tämän (todennäköisesti tahallisen) eksplikaation puutteen käännökseen. Nimellä on vieraannuttava vaikutus lähdetekstissä, ja käännöksen vieraannuttavaksi katsottu strategia ei tosiasiassa lisää vieraannuttavan vaikutuksen määrää. Poikkeava käännös Anansille esiintyy käännetyn kirjan nimessä: alkuperäinen *Anansi Boys* kääntyy *Hämähäkkijumalaksi*. Tällä käännöksellä Parpola kotouttaa yläkäsitteen käytöllä paitsi lähdetekstin, myös sen kulttuurin, josta lähdeteksti approprioi.

Toinen mielenkiintoinen ylimaallinen nimi on Spider, päähahmon veli. Koska Anansi tarkoittaa hämähäkkiä, on Spider – Anansin poika – tavallaan Gaimanin tuottama käännös. Parpola on kääntänyt myös tämän nimen vieraannuttavasti vierassanan käytöllä. Tämä on mielenkiintoista, koska toisin kuin Anansi, Spider on englanninkielinen sana. Suomen kielestä olisi helposti löytynyt toimiva käännös Spiderille (esimerkiksi ”Lukki”). Tämä todistaa, että ainakin tässä tapauksessa Parpolan vieraannuttava strategia on tietoinen valinta.

Mawu mainitaan vain kolme kertaa kirjassa. Mawu on Fon-kansan kaksiosaisen pääjumalan naispuolisko (Lynch & Roberts, 2010, s. 81). Anansin tavoin myös Fon-kansan mytologia on siirtynyt osittain Karibialle, mutta Mawu ei kuitenkaan kuulu

samaan mytologiaan Anansin kanssa: Anansi-tarinoissa pääjumala on Nyame (Lynch & Roberts, 2010, s. 93). Tämä tuntuu taittuvan kulttuurisen omimisen puolelle, ellei Gaiman tarkoituksella pyri luomaan ristiriitaista vaikutelmaa. Parpola on tunnollisesti kääntänyt Mawun sellaisenaan, siirtäen 'virheen' – ja kulttuurisen omimisen – myös käännökseen.

Ylimaalliset rituaalit

Toinen ylimaallisten elementtien kategoria, ylimaalliset rituaalit, käsittää *Anansi Boys*issa esiintyvät, muista kuin Gaimanin kulttuurista kotoisin olevat ylimaalliset tavat, kyvyt ja rituaalit. Monet kulttuurit määrittelevät itsensä käytäntöjensä ja rituaaliensa kautta, joten näiden elementtien kulttuurinen appropriatio on erityisen tulenarka aihe. Ylimaallisten rituaalien appropriatio on sisältöappropriatiota ja joissain tapauksissa myös subjektiappropriatiota. *Anansi Boys*issa esiintyy kolmea erilaista ylimaallisten rituaalien muotoa: 1) **taikalaulaminen**; 2) **jumalääni**, eli **ylimaallinen valehtelu**; ja 3) **yliluonnollisissa paikoissa vierailu**.

Päähenkilö Fat Charlie, hänen veljensä Spider ja heidän isänsä Mr. Nancy kykenevät kaikki **taikalaulamiseen**: näiden hahmojen laulu pystyy parantamaan ihmisiä (*Anansi Boys*, s. 435), johtaa etsityn asian luokse (*ibid.*, s. 411), ja voi jopa muuttaa todellisuuden luonnetta (*ibid.*, s. 434-437). Laulamisen – sekä tavallisen että taianomaisen – tärkeyttä korostetaan läpi kirjan. Laulamisen yhdistäminen Anansiin on kuitenkin yllättävä valinta Gaimanilta. Tutkiessani autenttista Anansia en ole löytänyt vahvaa yhteyttä laulamisen ja tämän jumaluuden väliltä. Tämä on selvää kulttuurista omimista Gaimanilta. Gaiman antaa lukijoilleen vääristyneen kuvan Anansin mytologiasta, ja näin vahvemman kulttuurin antamalla voimalla potentiaalisesti muuttaa ihmisten näkemystä vähemmän vaikutusvaltaisesta kulttuurista.

Suurin osa *Anansi Boys*in lauluun liittyvästä tekstistä on varsin yksiselitteistä eikä vaadi vaikeaa valintaa kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen väliltä. Parpola kääntää lauluun liittyvän tekstin suoraan, käyttäen pitkälti samoja strategioita kuin ylimaallisten nimien kohdalla. Kun valinta näiden kahden väliltä täytyy tehdä, Parpola käyttää useimmiten vieraannuttamista (eniten vierassanan käyttöä ja vieraannuttavia käännöslainoja).

Oikeiden kappaleiden nimet Parpola kääntää vierassanan käytöllä (varsin yleinen strategia, joten ei välttämättä tietoinen strategiavalinta). Esimerkiksi ”Strangers in the Night” ja ”What’s New Pussycat?” säilyttävät alkuperäisen ulkoasunsa *Hämähäkkijumalassa*. Monet kirjassa esiintyvistä kappaleista ovat alun perin mustien artistien esittämiä tai afroamerikkalaisten suosimista genreistä. Tämä todennäköisesti on selvää englanninkieliselle lukijalle, mutta ei välttämättä suomalaiselle lukijalle. Tämä on mielenkiintoista, sillä toisaalta käännös saattaa jättää lukijalleen vajavaisen kokemuksen tekstistä, mutta toisaalta pitäytymällä musiikin ja kappaleiden ’leimaamisesta mustiksi’ Parpola välttää potentiaalisen liiallisesta kotouttamisesta aiheutuvan kulttuurisen omimisen.

Toinen ylimaallinen rituaali, **jumalääni**, tarkoittaa kykyä sanoa asioita niin, että ne muuttuvat todeksi. Jumaläänellä hahmo voi muun muassa nimetä asioita uudestaan tavalla, joka saa asian muuttumaan nimensä kaltaiseksi (*Anansi Boys*, s. 5-6, 409), pakottaa ihmisen tekemään asioita (ibid., s. 150, 250), ja muunnella ihmisten näkemyksiä asioista (ibid., s. 221-222). Eniten jumalääntä kirjassa käyttää päähahmon veli Spider. Huijaaminen liittyy hyvin vahvasti autenttisen Anansin hahmoon, joten antaessaan tämän kaltaisen kyvyn omalle Anansilleen ja tämän jälkikasvulle Gaiman approprioi toista kulttuuria uskollisella tavalla.

Muutamissa kohdissa Parpola kääntää jumalääneen liittyvää tekstiä tavoilla, joita sopii tarkastella tarkemmin. Kirjan alussa Mr. Nancy nimeää uudelleen koiran. Koiran alkuperäinen nimi on Campbell’s Macinrory Arbuthnoth the Seventh, ja siitä tulee Goofy (käännöksessä Hoopo) kun Mr. Nancy sanoo:

(1a) Lähdeteksti: Hell of a goofy dog . . . Like that friend of Donald Duck’s. Hey, Goofy. (*Anansi Boys*, s. 6).

(1b) Kohdeteksti: Onpas siinä helkkarin hoopo koira . . . Vähän niin kuin se Aku Ankan kamu, Hessu Hopo. Hei, Hoopo. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, s. 11).

Hessu Hopon suomenkielinen sukunimi muuttuu kirjaimen verran, koska Parpola ei ole käännöksessään Gaimanin tavoin käyttänyt suoraan hahmon nimeä. Kyseessä on (varsin pienimuotoinen) kotouttaminen. Mielenkiintoisen käännöksestä tekee se, että jumalääni esitetään *Anansi Boysissa* poikkeuksetta nopeaksi, näppäräksi ja asian ytimeen iskeväksi, ja myös kuvaillaan tähän tyyliin. Käyttäessään selittämisen käännösstrategiaa Parpola

tekee tekstistä kömpelömmän ja monisanaisemman, tehden uskollisesti approprioidusta elementistä vähemmän toimivan käännöksessä.

Kolmas ylimaallinen rituaali, **yliluonnollisissa paikoissa vierailu**, tarkoittaa yliluonnollisiin paikkoihin siirtymistä. Monet kirjan ylimaallisista hahmoista pystyvät tähän luonnostaan, mutta mielenkiintoisempia ovat kirjan kohdat, joissa tavalliset ihmiset vierailevat yliluonnollisissa paikoissa. Näissä kohdissa Gaiman esittää itselleen vieraan kulttuurin tämän kulttuurin näkökulmasta suorittamassa rituaaleja, jotka Gaiman esittää kuuluvaksi tuohon kulttuuriin. Kirjassa on kaksi kohtausta, joissa afrokaribialaiset naiset suorittavat rituaalin, joka siirtää yhden osallistujista toiseen maailmaan. Ensimmäisellä kerralla (*Anansi Boys*, s. 190-194) rituaalia kuvaillaan enemmän, toisella kerralla (ibid., s. 393-394) se toistetaan vähemmällä kuvailulla.

Molemmat kohtaukset ovat koomisia: osallistujat riitelevät keskenään, vaihtavat rituaaliin tarvittavia raaka-aineita arkisempiin vaihtoehtoihin, ja kohtelevat muutenkin rituaalia köykäisesti. Seuraava lainaus kuvaa tätä tyyliä hyvin:

(2a) Lähdeteksti: “Now,” said Mrs Dunwiddy, “the devil-grass, the St John the Conqueror root, and the love-lies-bleeding.”

Mrs Bustamonte rummaged in her shopping bag and took out a small glass jar. “It’s mixed herbs,” she explained. “I thought it would be all right.”

“Mixed herbs!” said Mrs Dunwiddy. “Mixed herbs!” (*Anansi Boys*, s. 191).

(2b) Kohdeteksti: “Nyt,” rouva Dunwiddy sanoi, ”pirunruoho, Johannes Valloittajan juuri sekä tulirevonhäntä.”

Rouva Bustamonte kaiveli ostoskassiaan ja veti esiin pienen lasipurkin. ”Siinä on yrttisekoitusta,” hän selitti. ”Ajattelin, että se kävisi.”

”Yrttisekoitusta!” rouva Dunwiddy puuskahti. ”Yrttisekoitusta!” (*Hämähäkkijumala*, s. 156).

Kulttuuriappropriaation näkökulmasta kohtaus on ongelmallinen. Rituaali muistuttaa stereotyyppistä voodoo-rituaalia olematta kuitenkaan uskollinen kuvaus aidosta rituaalista. Rituaalia suorittavien hahmojen koominen tunarointi vähättelee rituaalia, joten se myös jossain määrin vähättelee rituaaliin osallistuvia hahmoja ja heidän uskontoaan ja kulttuuriaan.

Parpola kääntää myös yliluonnollisissa paikoissa vierailun suorasukaisesti, käyttäen vierassanoja ja erityisesti käännöslainoja. Esimerkkien 2a ja 2b *devil-grass* ja *St John the Conqueror root* ovat hyviä esimerkkejä: molemmissa tapauksissa Parpola on käyttänyt käännöslainaa. Parpolan käännös pyrkii säilyttämään alkuperäisen koomisen tyylin muun muassa sanavalinnoilla (”kökötti”, ”pörisivät”, ”mutaklöntin”) ja hahmojen dialogin arkipäiväisyydellä. Parpola onnistuukin mielestäni tavoittamaan koomisen tyylin, mutta käännös on silti ongelmallinen kulttuuriappropriaation perspektiivistä. Jos *Anansi Boys*issa esiintyvät kaksi yliluonnollisissa paikoissa vierailua ovat kulttuurista omimista, siirtää Parpolan käännös tuon omimisen myös *Hämähäkkijumalaan*. Mutta onko Parpolalla ollut valinnanvaraa? Voisiko kääntäjä muuttaa lähdetekstiä niin radikaalisti, että kohdetekstillä olisi tyystin eri informaation sisältö, tai tyyli?

Ylimaalliset tarinat

Kolmas ylimaallisten elementtien kategoria, ylimaalliset tarinat, käsittää kolme *Anansi Boys*issa esiintyvää, afrikkalaisesta ja afrokaribialaisesta kulttuurista kulttuuriapproprioitua tarinaa, jotka Gaiman on muokannut kirjaansa sopiviksi. Tarinankerronta on tärkeä osa Anansi-mytologiaa, joten on luonnollista ja kulttuuria uskollisesti approprioivaa sisällyttää tällaisia tarinoita kirjaan; tämä appropriatio on subjektiappropriaatiota. Kirjassa on kolme Anansi-tarinaa: **Anansin Isoäiti** (*Anansi Boys*, s. 51-54), **Anansi ja Tervavauva** (ibid., s. 133-136) ja **Anansi ja Lintu** (ibid., s. 51-54). Kaikki tarinat perustuvat autenttisiin Anansi-tarinoihin, ja niillä on hyvin ominainen approprioitu tyyli, joten tarinoiden käännöksissä on paljon analysoitavaa.

Tarinassa **Anansin Isoäiti** (*Anansi Boys*, s. 51-54) Anansin isoäiti kuolee vanhuuteen, jolloin Anansi huijaa kauppiaan uskomaan, että tämä tappoi isoäidin saadakseen tavaroita ilmaiseksi. Tämän jälkeen Anansi huijaa Tiikerin tappamaan isoäitinsä ja kaupustelemaan tämän ruumista. Gaimanin versio vastaa alkuperäisen mytologian “Anansi kills his Grandmother” -tarinaa (Beckwith, 1924, s. 164), joskin alkuperäisessä Anansi todella tappaa isoäitinsä. Anansi esiintyy alkuperäisessä tarinassa paljon negatiivisempana hahmona. Kyseinen tarina kerrotaan *Anansi Boys*in alkupuolella, jolloin on tarinan kannalta järkevää vahvistaa päähahmon asemaa positiivisena hahmona, sen sijaan että

esittäisi tämän monipuolisemmin. Tätä ajatusta tukee se, että kahdessa myöhemmässä ylimaallisessa tarinassa Anansi esitetään negatiivisemmin tai ainakin ristiriitaisemmin. Tarina kuitenkin muuttaa hahmoa: Gaiman muuttaa Anansia täyttääkseen länsimaisen yleisön odotukset.

Parpola pyrkii mukailemaan Gaimanin maanläheistä kirjoitustyyliä käännöksessään. Parpola kääntää preesensiin alkuperäisen mukaisesti, joka antaa tekstillä sellaista välittömyyttä, jota kansantarinalta voi olettaa. Parpola kääntää tarinan sävyltään lähemmäs suomalaista satua. Tämän tyylillisen piirteen voi huomata esimerkeissä 3a ja 3b, joista 3a on ylimaallisesta tarinasta ja 3b muualta kirjasta:

(3a) Ylimaallinen tarina: Kärrää siinä Anansi isoäitinsä kalmoa kottikärryissä koko aamun, niin saapuu kylään ja tuumii: minun on saatava viskiä. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, s. 48).

(3b) Ei ylimaallinen tarina: Vasta viimeisen virren aikana, kun Paksun Charlien äiti oli lipunut viimeiselle matkalleen liukuhihnaa pitkin, Paksu Charlie huomasi osapuilleen itsensä ikäisen miehen, joka seisoj kappelin takaosassa. (*Hämähäkkijumala*, s. 22).

Parpola käyttää käänteistä sanajärjestystä kohdissa, joissa lähdetekstissä on suora sanajärjestys (esim. *he goes in* → ”Menee Anansi sisään”, *he’s passing through town* → ”Kärrää siinä Anansi”), sijoittaa pronominin ”se” nimien eteen (esim. ”se Anansi”, ”sillä Tiikerillä”), ja käyttää vanhahtavaa kieltä ja erikoisia, usein koomisia sanoja (esim. ”uinuu”, ”kalmo”, ”talonräyhkä”). Strategia on vahvasti kotouttava, sillä se vaihtaa approprioidun afrokaribialaisen sävyn tilalle suomalaisen sävyn. Tämän on mielenkiintoista kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen näkökulmasta: kotouttavalla käännöksellään Parpola on tehnyt käännöksen tarinasta vähemmän approprioivan kuin alkuperäinen. Käännös on uskollinen alkuperäiselle tekstille tyyliltään ja sisällöltään vaikka muuttaa siitä samalla paljon.

Toinen ylimaallisista tarinoista on **Anansi ja Tervavauva** (*Anansi Boys*, s. 133-136), jonka alkuperäisversio on suomalaisellekin yleisölle tuttu. Beckwith on tallentanut kolme variaatiota tästä tarinasta: ”The Escape from Tiger” (Beckwith, 1924, s. 23); ”The Substitute” (ibid., s. 24); ja ”The Grave” (ibid., s. 25-26). Kaikissa kolmessa variaatiossa

perusajatuksena on se, että Anansi ylpeydessään jää kiinni tervavauvaan, ja sama elementti on pääosassa myös Gaimanin versiossa.

Gaimanin esittämä ylimaallinen tarina on lähempänä alkuperäistä kuin Anansin Isoäiti -tarina. Afrokaribialaiset vaikutteet ovat tässä tarinassa enemmän läsnä kuin aiemmassa, sekä miljöössä (herneiden viljely, leipäpuut) että kielenkäytössä (*weeny-weedy-weaky voice, lickle pot*). Gaiman onnistuu pysymään uskollisena alkuperäiselle samalla kun saa tarinan täyttämään tarkoituksensa tarinankerronnassa. Esimerkki 4a havainnollistaa hyvin Gaimanin tyyliä.

(4a) Lähdeteksti: So Anansi lay down on his bed and he sighed, long and loud, and his wife and his sons all came a-running. “I’m a-dying,” said Anansi, in this little teeny-weedy-weaky voice, “and my life is all over and done.” (*Anansi Boys*, s. 133).

(4b) Kohdeteksti: Niinpä Anansi pani maata ja huokasi, huokasi pitkään ja raskaasti, ja hänen vaimonsa ja poikansa juoksivat paikalle. ”Minä kuolen,” sanoi Anansi raihmaisella, ruikuttavalla, riutuneella äänellä, ”jo tuli noutaja.” (*Hämähäkkijumala*, s. 110).

Parpolan käännösstrategiat ovat samat kuin edellisen ylimaallisen tarinan kohdalla: käännteinen sanajärjestys, epätavalliset sanavalinnat ja preesens aikamuotona luovat vaikutelman sadusta. Käännös on jälleen kotouttava, joskin vieraannuttaviakin valintoja on tehty: Parpola on esimerkiksi jättänyt *pennyn* sellaisenaan kohdetekstiin.

Kolmas kirjan ylimaallisista tarinoista on **Anansi ja Lintu** (*Anansi Boys*, s. 214-216), joka vastaa Beckwithin tallentamaa ”Shut up in the Pot” -tarinaa (1924, s. 21). Gaimanin versiossa Anansi kertoo Linnulle löytäneensä yrttikylvyn joka parantaa kaikki vaivat. Lintu harrastaa seksiä Anansi kanssa päästäkseen kylpyyn, jonka jälkeen Anansi vangitsee Linnun kylpyyn, joka on tosiasiassa keittopata. Lopulta Anansin perhe syö Linnun. Alkuperäinen tarina on varsin samanlainen, vain antagonistit vaihtuvat. Tämä on sikäli mielenkiintoinen seikka, että alkuperäisten Anansitarinoiden antagonistit ovat täysin korvattavissa: antagonistit ovat ikään kuin statisteja, joiden funktio on tulla Anansin huijaamiksi. *Anansi Boys* on kuitenkin romaani, jonka hahmot eivät voi olla samalla tavalla ’yhden tekeviä’.

Parpolan käännös on jälleen suora ja kotouttava käänteisine sanajärjestyksineen ja erikoisine sanoineen. Toisista tarinoista poiketen tässä tarinassa on muutamia interjektioita. Interjektiot ovat tyypillisiä puhutulle kielelle (Norrick, 2009), jota Gaimanin tarinat esittävät (mutteivät tietenkään ole), joten niiden kääntäminen perustellulla tavalla on tärkeää. Gaimanin innostusta kuvaavat interjektiot ovat *Whoo!* ja *Whee!* Parpola on kääntänyt nämä interjektioilla ”Huiii!” ja ”Hueee!”, joista ensimmäinen muistuttaa interjektiota ”hui”, joka yleensä kuvaa lievää pelästystä tai yllätystä, ja jälkimmäinen ei muistuta mitään suomen kielen interjektiota. Parpola tuntuu ajatelleen lähdekielisten interjektioden ääneen lausutun ulkoasun olleen tärkeä, ja käänsi siksi interjektiot vieraannuttavasti vierassanan käytöllä. Lopputulos on kuitenkin se, että käännetyt interjektiot pistävät tarpeettomasti silmään ja saavat tarinan vaikuttamaan vähemmän autenttiselta.